

# RELIGION IN LIFE

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# Church, School, and Supreme Court

F. ERNEST JOHNSON

*Recent Supreme Court decisions seem to bar all specific religious training in the schools—but are we to surrender to the complete secularization of public education?*

THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION in the McCollum case should draw a new base line for Protestant thinking about the relation between church and state. This time it is our ox that is gored. Released-time religious education is our child. Some of our family disown the child, but that is neither here nor there. Up to now we have thought of the separation of church and state as virtually synonymous with religious liberty, a principle with which we consider ourselves closely identified historically. It has been something of a Protestant slogan. Now we find it used to challenge one of our most distinctive enterprises. We have regarded the separation of church and state almost as an aspect of Protestant strategy. There is a striking irony in the turning of the tables.

For we Protestants have been slipping into an unnatural alliance between churchmen and extreme secularists. Whereas our main concern from the beginning has been to defend religion against the state, their main concern is to defend the state against religion. The two are complementary, of course, not contradictory, but close preoccupation with either throws the relationship out of balance.

The explanation of this rather curious alliance is not difficult. The clash between Protestant and Catholic philosophies and interests has predisposed our leadership toward a militancy which accepts as allies all who share the militant attitude. I suggest that this tendency has led us to lose sight of the realities of the situation. It was largely Protestant urgency that created an atmosphere congenial to the new judicial line that has now been taken by the Supreme Court.

I say "new" advisedly. The decision in the Pierce case (1925) preventing the State of Oregon from outlawing parochial schools; the Cochran decision (1930) upholding the furnishing of the regular free textbooks to children in Louisiana's parochial schools; the Everson decision (1947) sustaining payment out of public funds for bus transportation of parochial school children in a New Jersey school district—all these, however judicially based, gave moral support to a minority religious group. Then came

the McCollum case denying co-operation with the public schools to majority and minority alike. Protestant religious educators rubbed their eyes. What had happened?

The judicial function is not a routine or mechanical one. The federal courts have to keep the Constitution alive and relevant to what is going on in a dynamic society. It is no reflection on the judges to note that they do not make their decisions in a social vacuum. A decision that is out of line with the tide of public opinion may lack the power of ultimate implementation. In the present instance, a turning point was registered in the impact of the *Everson* decision. Protestant and secular opinion combined in protest against the result, supported by a strong minority of the Supreme Court itself. Yet the ruling opinion in that case laid down the doctrine of no aid to one religion or all religions, which was the cardinal point on which the decision in the *McCollum* case was to turn. The principal minority opinion elaborated it to the point of complete separation, not merely between church and state, but between the spheres of religion and government. It should have been evident to us all that implicit in these opinions was a radical departure from the recent trend. But Protestant opinion focused on the bus fares, taking the no-aid doctrine in stride and showing no concern over the extreme secularism of the minority opinion, which but for the lack of one vote would have made new basic law. The *McCollum* case, which in effect bridged the gap, was an altogether logical sequel. Its significance runs far beyond the particular dispute which it settled, and I propose to discuss it in some detail. However, the first question with which it confronts official Protestantism is what to do about the released-time plan in which the Protestant churches in this country have acquired so large a stake.

#### WHITHER RELEASED TIME?

It would be gratuitous for one not charged with official responsibility in the matter to attempt any formulation of policy with respect to weekday religious education. The International Council of Religious Education has both responsibility and high competence in this field. Certain generalizations, however, may be made about which I think there will be little argument among Protestants who have studied the *McCollum* decision carefully.

First, the ruling opinion affords no clear directives for determining what is legal and what is not. This is broadly intimated in the concurring opinion written by Justice Frankfurter and approved by three of his colleagues. Determination of the operational meaning of the decision will manifestly have to await rulings in other cases sufficiently different from

the Champaign case to warrant a ruling by the Supreme Court.

Secondly, there is nonetheless a measure of guidance to be found as to what the most crucial elements were in the Champaign situation that caused it to fall under the judicial ban. We are not warranted in assuming that the use of the school buildings is the determining factor. The several states present a variety in law and practice with respect to the use of school property outside school hours. It seems probable, therefore, that this feature of the case acquired significance only as part of a plan which was adjudged by the Court to be an integration of religious with secular education. On this view, a similar set-up, differing only in that classes are held outside the school building, would also meet with judicial disapproval. To put it the other way, there is no basis for concluding that an otherwise acceptable plan would become illegal just by being transferred from a church to a school building. What the Court condemned was an arrangement by which, in a variety of ways, the school system is brought into collaboration with religious groups in the giving of religious instruction.

Thirdly, however the legal situation is interpreted, pending further judicial decisions, the crisis in weekday religious education occasioned by the McCollum decision should lead to a searching evaluation of it. The fact that Protestant opinion is now divided both as to the value of the plan and as to its consistency with the federal Constitution makes reappraisal all the more important. To make adjustments only to the extent deemed necessary to "get by" the courts would be to substitute legal strategy for educational policy, and would hardly commend itself either to public opinion or to the sober judgment of our own constituency. At the same time it must be remembered that there are those whose interest in the subject is limited to restraining religious effort by every possible means, and they may be expected to cry "defiance" wherever a vestige of released time remains. Justice Reed may be right in thinking that the McCollum decision invalidates all plans where the essential minimum of co-operation between school and church obtains. But the vagueness and inconclusiveness of the ruling opinion surely warrants continuance of plans locally approved and tested by experience where there is a reasonable presumption that they do not fall under the ban. After all, as the late Justice Holmes said in a famous dictum, "The life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience."

#### A NEW INTERPRETATION OF SEPARATION

But the Everson and McCollum doctrine—to use a lawyer's term—must be studied in terms of the judicial philosophy it embodies. Indeed,

one might almost say that if some serious disturbance of Protestant enterprise was necessary in order to arouse our churches to the meaning of the current trend, the upsetting of existing programs will not be without its compensations. It is to be hoped that those among us who are sincerely convinced that the latest decision is a wholesome one will lift their sights beyond released time and take account of the larger implications of the judicial trend.

The heart of the matter is, of course, the meaning of the legal principle of separation between church and state. While the *Everson-McCollum* doctrine runs far beyond the original meaning of the separation formula, I think some critics of the judicial opinions go too far in the other direction. For, as Justice Reed pointed out, there has been some historical accretion to that principle, and it will hardly be fruitful to attempt to define it for today in terms suggested by the language of the First Amendment—as extended to the states under the Fourteenth. This is what the defense in the *McCollum* case sought to do, and the Court brushed it aside. It should be useful to inquire why. The opinions themselves give no direct answer.

Certainly, the appeal to Madison and Jefferson leads to no such result as the Court reached. If the "traditional" doctrine of separation is to be defined in terms of the opinions of those statesmen, the definition will not look like anything in the ruling opinion in the *McCollum* case. The eminent and able jurists could not have been in any doubt on this point. They had the pertinent documents before them, assembled in the Appellees' Brief, and quoted by Justice Reed in his dissent. During the debate in Congress on the First Amendment Madison said, so the *Annals of Congress* report, that "he apprehended the meaning of the words to be, that Congress should not establish a religion, and enforce the legal observation of it by law, nor compel men to worship God in any manner contrary to their conscience." And as for Jefferson, when Rector of the University of Virginia he made a proposal with reference to religious education which was incorporated in the Regulations of the University in these words:

Should the religious sects of this State, or any of them, according to the invitation held out to them, establish within, or adjacent to, the precincts of the University, schools for instruction in the religion of their sect, the students of the University will be free, and expected to attend religious worship at the establishment of their respective sects, in the morning, and in time to meet their school in the University at its stated hour.

Incidentally, this was approved by Madison as one of the official "visitors" of the University.

To be sure, regulations of a state university adopted in 1824 raised no federal question, since the First Amendment had not then been made applicable to the states. But this provision for religious education in the University of Virginia makes it just about as certain as it can be that Jefferson would not have considered such a plan as the Supreme Court has now banned in Illinois a violation of the separation of church and state. There is an abundance of corroborating evidence that the Everson-McCollum doctrine is not that of the Founding Fathers. What the Supreme Court manifestly believes is that if they were living today they would agree with the Court's present interpretation. Whether this is correct or not, what the Fathers thought does not determine the meaning of the separation principle in 1948. As Justice Frankfurter said in his concurring opinion in the McCollum case, in which three of his colleagues joined, "we are dealing not with a full-blown principle, nor one having the definiteness of a surveyor's metes and bounds."

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the separation of church and state, like the distinction of federal from state powers and that between the functions of the three arms of the federal government, is a matter of basic importance, but one whose operational meaning has to be worked out in practice. The courts, like other instruments of government, have to proceed by trial and error. Since the days of Holmes and Brandeis this has become almost axiomatic, though it has long been implicit in the vigorous dissents in which the judges excoriate each other.

#### WHAT HAS BEEN ADDED?

The new increment of basic law documented by these cases is not easy to define by reference to specific passages in the opinions, but there are several that claim attention. The most patent—and many persons think the most arguable—addition to the Madison conception is contained in this sentence, which occurs in both ruling opinions: "Neither [a state nor the Federal Government] can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another." The crucial words are, of course, "aid all religions." This point is made explicit in the ruling opinion in the McCullom case:

For the First Amendment rests upon the premise that both religion and government can best work to achieve their lofty aims if each is left free from the other within its respective sphere.

The same document condemns the use of the tax-supported schools "for the dissemination of religious doctrines." Moreover, this opinion makes



an approving footnote reference to the dissenting opinion in the *Everson* case in so far as the "wall of separation" is concerned, quoting among other passages the following:

Legislatures are free to make, and courts to sustain, appropriations only when it can be found that in fact they do not aid, promote, encourage or sustain religious teachings or observances, be the amount large or small.

Here we have "observances" coupled with "teachings," with no reference to their sectarian character.

Somewhere in this maze of legal language, school boards and administrators and the lower courts must try to discover the present meaning for public education of the separation of church and state. It is easy to point out ambiguities and there is reason for doing so whenever it is claimed that we now have the final word—a prescription for absolute separation. A casual reading of the opinions should be enough to dispel that idea. But there appears to be a substantial deposit of hitherto unformulated doctrine which can be isolated.

First, we have in these two cases a positive affirmation that whatever the Constitution means with respect to Congress in this matter of religion it means for the states. This may well be regarded as a result of the normal evolution of the law.

Secondly, we have an expansion of the "establishment" concept to include assistance to all religions: in effect, to religion in any form. Thus *church* and state become practically synonymous with *religion* and the state. This, I think, is clearly a secularist accretion—a reflection in judicial terms of the modern trend toward the nonrelevance of religion to the common life.

Thirdly, we find in these opinions, as a corollary of this expansion of the separation concept, the doctrine that no religious instruction, no matter how wide a consensus it may represent, has any place in tax-supported schools. Inclusion of this point here as a new increment of doctrine does not mean that it is a new idea. It is difficult to dispute Justice Frankfurter's statement in his opinion in the *McCullum* case that by 1875 "the separation of public education from Church entanglements, *of the state from the teaching of religion*, was firmly established in the consciousness of the nation." (Italics mine.) But the authorities he cites are historians of the subject, not court decisions.

#### WHAT STAND SHOULD PROTESTANTS TAKE?

Here, then, we are confronted with a situation that calls for discriminating judgment. The obligation to conform may be taken for granted.



The obligation to accept is less inclusive. A Supreme Court Justice once said to the writer that popular remonstrance over a decision by that tribunal is part of the democratic process. The question is, when is remonstrance in order, and when is it merely reactionary?

It would seem pointless to contend further that the federal government and the states should, or can, have different policies in respect to the relation of church and state. True, education is primarily a function of the states. But it is incumbent upon the states to implement *basic* national policies, such as those defined in the Bill of Rights. If in an area of specific state responsibility the Supreme Court were to allow forty-eight varieties of interpretation of a basic national policy, chaos might easily result. Experimentation is necessary and desirable, but the federal courts must be watchful wherever religious liberty is concerned. It seems to me that we should wholeheartedly accept the principle that whatever separation of church and state is authoritatively declared to mean, it means for the states as well as for the federal government.

But the conversion of the church-state formula into one that defines the relation of the state to religion is, in my judgment, gratuitous and contrary to our entire tradition. Let it be granted at once that the American churches have a grievous burden of responsibility for the situation in which the most eminent jurors in the nation could declare that a "high and impregnable wall" must divide the spheres of government and religion. If the divisions of Christendom have made religion and sectarianism virtually synonymous, these recent court decisions should be a great spur to the ecumenical movement—and to genuine interfaith co-operation.

But to implement this absolutist doctrine would lead us into an isolationism between religion and government which it is probably safe to say no member of the Supreme Court would sanction. One thinks, for example, of official Thanksgiving Day proclamations, prayers in Congress and the state legislatures, the federal religious census, and the chaplaincy in the armed services—no matter who pays the salaries. In the public schools this absolute separation between religion and the state would outlaw practices that are all but universal, of which religious observances at the Christmas season are the most conspicuous example. Justice Jackson in his opinion in the *McCullom* case set forth with, I think, a pardonable touch of sarcasm the absurdities into which an attempt to take all religious subject matter out of the schools would lead.

Nor can an absolute principle be implemented even with reference to "religious groups" without following a reactionary course. Imagine a

deputation from a group representing such an official Protestant organization as the former Commission on a Just and Durable Peace calling on the President and being told that the Supreme Court has held it improper for him to confer with them except as private individuals! Of course, the Supreme Court contemplates nothing of the kind, but the separation formula it has given us, carried to its logical conclusion, would not exclude it.

Coming now to the question of religious instruction in the schools—as distinguished from religious observances, which are common—we must make up our minds where we stand on the much-discussed question of religious instruction of the so-called nonsectarian type. The recent Supreme Court decisions bear only indirectly on the subject where no outside religious groups are involved. The *Everson-McCullom* doctrine, however, seems clearly to ban all specific religious teaching in the schools, however given. Where nothing approximating released time exists, religious teaching in the schools could perhaps not be brought under the category of aid to “religious groups to spread their faith.” But it would be religious instruction in the schools, which appears to be condemned by the Supreme Court. Shall we accept this as final or contend for the right of the schools to teach a “common religious faith”?

There are some who contend that a distinction can be made between what is sectarian and what is nonsectarian, and that the latter can be incorporated as instruction in the public school program consistently with the separation between church and state. If they are right about this, then the Supreme Court is in error in treating all religious instruction as sectarian. I am strongly of the opinion that on this point the Court is essentially right.

It may well be said that existing religious observances in the schools constitute a broad assumption of a common faith, and that this is not consistent with the absence of corresponding religious instruction. Yet there is a difference between a ritual and a creed, and a large part of our population think it a very important difference. From the point of view of public policy in a secular social order, all religious indoctrination, however limited in scope, is sectarian. As such, it falls under the ban of both federal and state courts.<sup>1</sup>

Acceptance of this position, we must admit, entails a serious handicap for all who wish their children to have a unified, integrated education, every part of which shall be somehow related to a common religious faith. That

<sup>1</sup>This and other aspects of the subject of this paper are fully discussed in *The Relation of Religion to Public Education—the Basic Principles*, 1947, prepared by a committee of the American Council on Education, of which the writer is a member.

the seriousness of the limitation is not more fully recognized by our great Protestant population is evidence of the extent to which our own thinking has been secularized. The facile disposal of the problem by secularist writers who would "leave all religion to the churches" is shortsighted where it is sincere. Nothing is plainer than the ~~un~~neutrality in religion of a school program which professes to include everything essential to "general education" and accords to religion conspicuous inattention. In such a situation the church and the home are grievously handicapped in any effort to make religion seem important.

But if the schools can do nothing in the way of intensive religious education, is there no solution of the problem? I think there is a partial solution. And in a secular age partial solutions of religious problems are the most we can hope for. Unless and until our Western culture achieves a common faith as effective as that which held the medieval world together, religion will not come into its own as a cultural force.

#### WHAT CAN THE SCHOOLS DO?

The American public schools have a responsibility with respect to religion which has nothing to do with the desires or purposes of religious groups as such. That responsibility is part and parcel of the fidelity education owes to the cultural heritage. This proposition seems to me so elementary that but for sectarian conflict it would probably never have been questioned. But my experience indicates that the function of the public schools in relation to religion cannot be made clear so long as the word "teach" is used to define it. Modern educators are wholly accustomed to the concept of teaching as guided study without directive indoctrination, but most of them have not learned to apply it to religion. The complex problems of community life, the cross-currents of political and economic thought, conflicting moral standards, the rival art forms that compete for favor—all these are made subject matter for teaching without dogmatism in the modern secondary school. When some kind of orthodoxy in politics or economics tends to fasten itself upon the study program we seek to correct the balance, not to take the whole thing out of the curriculum. What the American people have a right to demand of their schools in the matter of religion is that the students be made intelligent about the role of religion in the life of man and society. A high-school graduate should surely be as well informed about the religious life of his own town as he is about its political and industrial life.

All this has nothing to do with the religious "instruction" given

by the church and the home. It rests solely on the requirement that education be culturally adequate. The role of the religious organizations in relation to it is to facilitate such study by making information available to inquiring students. If our faith in intelligence is well founded, religion has much to gain by the increase of religious literacy in the population as a whole. If there are forms of religion that cannot stand disinterested and respectful inquiry their vitality is suspect. No one can say to what extent crude and anachronistic forms of religious thought and practice are due to an artificial isolation of religion from those elements of the culture which are comprehended in public education. And conversely, education that is kept remote from the religious heritage is immeasurably poorer.

Negatively, public education has a responsibility to keep out of the schools indoctrination against the religious convictions of masses of the American people. I am not speaking of science. If the established conclusions of science are considered hostile to religion it is the latter that needs reconstruction. But to give a spurious finality to an antitheistic philosophy of life and to urge its acceptance in the classroom—this is the most flagrant type of violation of the separation of church and state. It is often said that objective study of religion in the schools is impossible because "the churches won't stand for it." In view of the extreme docility of organized religion in the face of an aggressive secularist philosophy, this remark impresses me as curiously unrealistic. That there are many "hot" situations, rendered acute by sectarian controversy—or rigid by sectarian domination of the schools by either side—in which any educational innovation would create a storm, may be taken for granted. But when an eminent educator can publicly propose that democratic education shall be frankly based upon an antitheistic philosophy and no protest from the churches ensues, I find it difficult to take seriously the professed fear of church interference with public education in the organization of its own curriculum.

In order to discharge their responsibility for guided study of religion as a phase of the culture, the schools must have teachers prepared for the task. This means that teacher education institutions and liberal arts colleges should see that those whom they certify as teachers of literature, the arts, the social sciences, and other curricular subjects are equipped to handle the religious aspects of their own disciplines. It means, for example, that a social studies teacher shall have competence to direct a project in the study of religious institutions in the community along with those of government, business, and industry. What we need is wholeness in the educative process.

Is this proposal consistent with the Supreme Court decisions we have

been considering? In one particular it is not. That is to say, if the sweeping secularism expressed in the prescription of absolute separation of the spheres of religion and the state is to be taken at full value, even the mention of religion in the school may be pronounced taboo. But as noted earlier, the implications of such an extreme doctrine are fantastic in any case. If the public schools independently and in their own right will undertake to deal competently and fairly with religious subject matter as it appears in the various areas of study, instead of ignoring or belittling it, I think they will have no trouble with the Supreme Court. More than this we cannot ask them to do. But if they will do it the churches will be in position to do what the community expects of them, unhampered by the unneutrality of a completely secularized public education.

# Sex Standards and Christian Teaching

SYLVANUS M. DUVAL

*The Kinsey studies throw into relief moral standards in present American life—An examination of those principles which are eternally valid.*

"IN THE LIGHT of the Kinsey studies, what should be our attitude toward . . ." Everyone who lectures, discusses, or preaches about marriage, the family, or sex is confronted with such a question. The ordinary minister may not have been asked this question directly, but he may be sure that this question is in the minds of many in his congregation. What answer have we religious leaders to give to the larger issue of which the Kinsey studies have temporarily become the focus? In order to give sound guidance which our people have a right to expect of us, we should first of all know something of the present state of scientific knowledge about sex, and what the Kinsey studies are.

The scientific approach to a study of sex behavior stems from two main sources: psychoanalysis and anthropology. We need not review here the monumental contributions associated with the name of Sigmund Freud. Less well understood by the public are such careful studies of sex behavior as Edward Westermarck's *The History of Human Marriage*, an American edition of which appeared as early as 1891. But since most of his work related to "primitive" peoples, rather than Americans, it caused no popular sensation. Sumner's well-known *Folkways*, which first appeared in 1906, also gave considerable attention to sex behavior. In more recent years a number of studies have specifically centered upon the sex behavior of Americans, those of Bromley and Britten, Davis, Dickenson, Hamilton, Landis, and Terman being among the more widely known. The Kinsey studies differ from the earlier works in that they are concerned specifically with Americans, and from the more recent studies in that they have been conducted on both a far more extensive and a more intensive scale. For reasons which we shall not consider here, they have also received a publicity and evoked a public interest far greater than that which has ever been enjoyed by any technical scientific study. The last phrase is used advisedly. The Kinsey Report is based on highly specialized technical studies such as would ordinarily be of interest only to trained workers in the field. However sensational



some of its conclusions may be, the report itself is about as interesting as the *Statistical Abstracts*. For such a work to become a best seller is as startling as if the circulation of the *Journal of Orthodontistry* suddenly began to rival that of the *Saturday Evening Post*.

#### WHAT DO THE KINSEY STUDIES<sup>1</sup> SAY?

To know the studies with any degree of thoroughness would require much hard digging among rather dull facts and tables. Few of those who discuss so avidly and fearsomely have really mastered the material. Quite obviously they have depended upon magazine articles or only summary statements from the study itself.

We may begin by pointing out ways in which the Kinsey findings confirm some of the major emphases and views of Christian morality, such as:

Moral standards are largely determined by the family during the earlier years.

The more educated men become, the more moral they are.

Those most closely related to the church observe Christian standards best.

Men observe moral standards today as well as did their elders. (There is considerable confirmatory evidence for this.) Yet after all these favorable findings have been duly recognized, the conclusions are still highly disturbing to Christian people. Few men have faithfully observed the moral standards which the American people in general, and Christian people in particular, are supposed to uphold. Nine out of ten American men have had sex relationships outside of marriage, and half have committed adultery after marriage. Sex behavior which we have generally regarded as "perverted" and "unnatural" is revealed to be surprisingly common.

#### HOW ARE THE STUDIES REGARDED?

Most religious leaders are not experts in human relationships. As their people will turn to them for guidance, so they must turn to specialists for aid in their interpretations. What do the "experts" say? Obviously not all will agree. The following are some of the types of reaction which have greeted the studies.

*Shocked resentment.* In view of the strength of sex taboos in our culture, the lack of violent denunciation of the Kinsey reports is more

<sup>1</sup> So far only one printed volume of these studies has yet appeared; *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, W. B. Saunders, 1948.

striking than the reports themselves. Here and there are denunciations, or even demands for suppression, but no strong chorus takes this line. Especially significant is the restraint of church leaders, whose interests and values are most severely threatened. The absence of violent opposition from this source indicates both a wholesome humility, and among some, a calm confidence in the stability of basic Christian values which is heartening.

*Excited surprise.* Many reviewers of otherwise substantial papers and magazines are not technical specialists, and have displayed a peculiar clumsiness in evaluating the work. A lengthy three-page review boldly proclaiming itself to be "a critical appraisal" (*New Republic*, February 9, 1948) is little more than an articulation of the breathless excitement of the reviewer. The tone is that of the little boy who saw his first giraffe: "Whee, look what I see!" Another reviewer for a magazine closely related to social problems (*Survey Graphic*, February, 1948) makes the astounding confession that "most of the facts come as a distinct surprise even to professional people working in the field of human behavior." One wonders where these professional workers have been! Professor Kinsey has been announcing his findings for several years. I have been using his material with my students for two years before the study was published.

*Critical analysis, or what is presented as such.* This has become so frequent, not only in reviews but in full-sized books, that we shall here only summarize the major questions that have been raised relative to the studies.

#### MAJOR QUESTIONS RAISED CONCERNING THE KINSEY REPORTS

1. *The reliability of the sampling.* Scientific opinion polls make accurate predictions upon the basis of relatively small samplings, but these are most carefully selected. The proportion of people from each social, economic, religious, political, or other level or group is carefully worked out to ensure a proper balance. The *Literary Digest* political poll (1936) showed that without such careful balance, even a million replies can be basically misleading. How much more would 5,000, or even 100,000 samples, taken from any who would volunteer! Dorothy Thompson flatly declares (*Ladies Home Journal*, May, 1948) that the studies can be regarded as valid only for "largely urban, predominately college-educated, nonreligious and not overly reticent males under thirty." The *New York Herald Tribune* takes the same line (February 1, 1948).

However valid such criticisms may be, they offer cold comfort to those who would like to believe that a large proportion of American men observe our sex code. The testimony of those from the armed forces, our venereal disease and illegitimacy rates, and lesser studies such as those of Terman, confirm the basic findings of the Kinsey studies on the extent of extramarital intercourse. Regarding "perversions" there is no such general knowledge among the well informed. We must await further studies before we can confirm or deny.

2. *The reliability of the technique.* As we would expect, psychiatrists and others familiar with their conclusions have had a field day attacking the validity of data based in part upon a memory of childhood experiences. This criticism is doubtless well taken. The extent to which people "forget" experiences unacceptable to their egos is well known. Even with the generous allowances for error which the investigators have made, the validity of data based upon the memories of early childhood which can be evoked in a single interview is dubious.

Yet much of this criticism, however valid, is beside the point. A large proportion of certain types of research in human behavior depend upon the honesty and reliability of the memory of persons to whom questions are addressed. Kinsey and his colleagues have developed an interview technique which is far superior to any which has ever been used on so extensive a scale. To call into question their findings is to invalidate much of the research so far developed. Furthermore, however unreliable may be a man's judgment on the when and from whom of first sex information, he does know whether or not he has had extramarital sex experiences, or makes a practice of "unnatural" forms of sexual expression. Where the information is really important, it is potentially reliable.

3. *The adequacy of the data.* Knowing how many people have suffered accidents would be of little significance unless we knew the kind of accident, how many accidents, and how serious were the injuries of those who were involved. Likewise, knowing what proportion of men have at one time or another had an extramarital or adulterous relationship, tells us little of significance. The boy who may have had one relationship with a girl to whom he was engaged, or the married man who yielded once in a moment of weakness, emerge as a "statistic" not observably different from the "rounder." Statistics which tell us nothing about the frequency with which the individuals involved violate the standards, or their attitudes toward such violation, are of little value and may prove actually misleading.

4. *The social context and meaning of sexual behavior.* We are coming more and more to realize that in all human behavior, the most important consideration is its meaning. To the teacher, the child who "acts up" in school may be "bad," or "selfish," or "disagreeable," or "lazy." The scientist knows that any such behavior had meaning, and is to be intelligently understood only in terms of this meaning. The Kinsey studies do distinguish between nocturnal emissions, intercourse within marriage, outside of marriage, and with prostitutes. Yet there is little attempt to interpret such behavior in terms of its meanings. In not a few discussions, all such behavior is lumped under the one term "outlets." For some purposes, such blurrings of essential distinctions may be legitimate. At other points it is not. The most serious questions are properly raised, not at the failure of the authors to make such distinctions, but at what seems to be their unawareness that such distinctions exist. Professor Kinsey was trained in the biological sciences. We can hardly expect that he could do a piece of research in human behavior with the soundness that we would expect of a social scientist. Indeed it is hard to see, with the kind of study which he has undertaken, how he could effectively determine the social context and emotional tones of the behavior he studies. It would be decidedly desirable, however, if this limitation could frankly be recognized. The lack of awareness of both meanings and social context is not only the most vulnerable, but the most serious defect of the study as a whole.

Yet the Kinsey studies are still our most valid and impressive scientific data on sex behavior. Despite some glaring limitations, we should be grateful to the investigators for helping us know where we stand on so central a problem of human relationships.

#### ESSENTIALS FOR SOUND GUIDANCE IN THE AREA OF SEX BEHAVIOR

The people who look to us for guidance—our students, the members of our churches, and the public whom we may influence—are not basically concerned with the technical validity of this or that study. They have to live, one way or another, in a real world; a world which is baffling and confused. What they need and rightly demand from us is sound guidance as to what standards of sex conduct they ought themselves to observe, what their attitudes and relationships should be regarding friends and neighbors who may observe different standards, what standards they should inculcate in their children, and how to do this effectively. Here are some suggestions relative to our task.

1. We should know how to interpret the Kinsey studies in their total

moral context. However startling they may seem regarding sex, they tell us little that is new about morality as a whole. The sad fact is that in few areas of life have any large proportion of Americans ever observed the moral standards which they profess. Decades ago, Lincoln Steffens and his fellow "muckrakers" tore the lid off our political situation. They showed that political corruption was not limited to the underworld and the occasional acts of grafters. On the contrary it was an established system, actively supported by our "good" people. Ida Tarbell and other investigators of "robber barons" revealed a similar situation in business. Today those who prate most about "free competition" use what they denounce as the tyranny of governmental controls to circumvent competition whenever it is for their economic advantage to do so. In brilliant reviews, Upton Sinclair has shown the extent to which our exalted democracy and freedom are limited by economic domination. No one even pretends that we have equal justice and democracy for the Negro in America today, or even for our lower-income white groups. Hartshorne and May in their careful *Studies in Deceit* revealed the prevalence of personal dishonesty. Some years ago I conducted some modest studies among students in training as Christian missionaries. Not ninety per cent, but practically all, hotly defended deceit as necessary, especially in social situations. Present-day advertising is admittedly based, not upon presenting an objective picture of a product, but upon putting it in the most favorable light. The Kinsey studies show that moral standards are far more widely observed in sex behavior than in many other important areas of life.

2. We must see and interpret moral standards, not as the minimum to be attained by most, but as goals toward which we should strive.

Suppose that a survey should reveal that ninety per cent of our children were undernourished, what would be our attitude? Would we condemn those who had made the survey? Or would we abandon our ideal of a good diet for all? Or would we seek to find ways of meeting our ideals more effectively? Moral standards are like health standards; goals which we uphold toward which people should strive. We are not shocked or alarmed because most people are sometimes sick. We do not condemn those who are or have been ill. Neither do we classify a man as ill because at one time he has been sick. And certainly we do not toss away our standards as hopeless. Instead we strive to develop means whereby more people can meet sound standards more completely.

Let us be as sensible about this matter of sex morality. In all other areas of life, widespread violation calls not for abandonment of stand-



ards but for their strengthening and support. Faced with widespread political corruption, we try to make our efforts for better government more effective. In like manner we strive for a more ethical economic order; we try to make social relationships more democratic, and to replace our superstitions and "hush-hush" with truth. We do so because if a moral code is valid, it is valid even if violated one hundred per cent. The ideal of truth may serve to illustrate this point. Almost all of us practice "social lying" to avoid hurting the feelings of others. There is considerable evidence from psychiatry to indicate that such "kindness" is mistaken. We are now coming to feel that people should be brought to face their personal limitations, rather than to avoid them. Only as they see and accept the truth about themselves can they be cured of their maladjustments. In truth we see an ideal violated practically one hundred per cent which is not only valid, but which we can teach people to observe to a considerable extent, once we find out how.

3. We should strengthen moral standards by making them sounder and more valid.

For many years groups striving to reform government attempted to do so by abolishing the political machine. We have since learned that their efforts were futile, in part because they sought to do what cannot be done. In American political life there is no government without a machine. The machine is an instrument which can be used for either evil or good purposes. The task is not to eliminate machine politics, but to replace bad machines by machines which are used for good.

In the area of sex morality we have made many gains. We used to teach that sex was so wicked and nasty that it must not even be discussed by decent people. Even within marriage it was regarded as a regrettable concession to human weakness. We have largely corrected this distorted attitude. We now believe that sex, when morally controlled, can add much to the richness and worth of life. Frank and open discussion, far from being wrong, are essential to a solution of its problems.

This is all to the good, but so far the gains have been mainly negative. We have succeeded remarkably well in removing some of the unwholesome constrictions which distorted the emotional life and conduct of previous generations, so that people today are more released than once they were. But all this is only a good start; a clearing of the ground. Much constructive work has yet to be done.

4. We must seriously tackle the problem of constructing a really sound code of sex conduct.



The most serious challenge to Christian leadership is not the remote possibility that sex standards may collapse, nor even the extent to which they are violated. It is rather a confusion as to what these standards ought to be. We have brought up a generation without the emotional blockages on sex which were drilled into those of us who are older. We teach them that sex can be wholesome and fine. When they marry, many of our ministers consult with them about their sex relationships, and give them material describing how sex relationships within marriage can be more enriching and pleasurable. But if sex is so fine and enriching within marriage, why can it not be moral also outside of marriage?

Some twenty years ago, the dominant tone of those who counseled with me in this area was guilt. Today it is confusion. A woman student with a strong church background is under strong pressure for clandestine relationships from men she likes. She frankly wonders whether her standards have any basis except the teachings of her childhood. A prominent lay leader in the church, unusually spiritually sensitive, states that he does not object if his wife consorts with other men, provided she puts him first. A group of teachers in a high school consult me about a clique of boys in the school who are out to "make" every girl they can. Much of the disturbance of some of the teachers reflects questions about their own standards. Perhaps they personally are missing out on worthwhile experiences.

The Christian leader who would give sound guidance to such confused persons is distinctly at a loss for suitable material. Much of what used to be good discussion is now outdated by changed attitudes and new knowledge. In other instances, the author has not had scientific training in such essential fields as social psychology and mental hygiene. He is therefore limited to a discussion of the more obvious dangers of illicit relationships, such as unwanted pregnancies and venereal diseases, and the unfavorable conditions under which the clandestine affair is conducted. Writers on marriage usually say something about moral standards of sex behavior, but their most serious attention is centered elsewhere. Despite all our alarm and pother, neither the church nor any other group has yet produced an even reasonably adequate statement on sex morality which is based upon our best scientific knowledge and deepest spiritual insights! If we are to give sound guidance, we must, without delay, set about the preparation of such statements, especially prepared for the following groups: high school, post high school and college, married couples (dealing especially with the problem of adultery), parents of adolescents, and Christian leaders who give guidance to others. Such materials should

be the result of collaboration between technically trained specialists, experienced people in the field, and writers who have proved ability to state principles in ways which are most meaningful for the groups to whom materials are addressed. But while such material is being prepared, what is the Christian leader to do? The following two points are suggestions.

5. In moral guidance, we should center attention upon the people, rather than upon the standards.

As Jesus would have said, moral standards are made for man, not man for moral standards. The task of the Christian leader, whether in the sermon or in personal counseling, is to confront people with the situations to which certain types of behavior will lead. Valid moral standards grow out of the correct appraisal of situations and consequences. The person who feels unready to furnish guidance in evaluating courses of conduct is probably not ready to give effective moral guidance in this area.

6. In moral guidance, a sound spiritual emphasis must be central.

Some Christian leaders, in their attempts to be "scientific," have gullibly swallowed the notion that sex is central in marriage, if not in all of life. The very people whose spiritual insights should have protected them from our absurd tendency to overvalue sex have accentuated the fallacy. For if man does not live by bread alone, neither does he live by sex alone, or even primarily.

The practical results of this distortion have been regrettable. Misled by what they falsely supposed were the teachings of science, many people have expected from sex, whether within or outside of marriage, a depth of satisfaction which a relationship based mainly upon sex just cannot give. At this point, religious leaders must recover the realization that man is basically a spiritual being and, as such, can find abiding satisfactions only upon a spiritual level. Only upon such a foundation can we build an ethic which will give to sex its rightful place. We shall then see sex as neither sinful nor central but, under the proper conditions and safeguards, as a delightful and enriching supplement to lives which are soundly centered.

These are tough times in which to live. Our fathers, whatever their hardships, could feel that at least the ground upon which they trod was sound. We cannot. To live satisfactorily in an atomic age requires a far greater and deeper inner strength. Such a stability and satisfaction will not come from an uninhibited chasing down every rabbit hole after a thrill. It will come only from creative achievement. Only those who root their lives in spiritual realities can have that peace which passeth all understanding, which the world cannot give and the world cannot take away.

# The Spiritual State of the World Today\*

NICHOLAS BERDYAEV

*A penetrating and prophetic analysis by the distinguished Russian Orthodox philosopher. RELIGION IN LIFE publishes this article as a worthy memorial to a great Christian thinker.*

## I. CRISIS

EVERYTHING in the present-day world is placed under the sign of crisis—not only a social and economic one, but also a crisis of culture, a spiritual crisis; everything has become problematical. What is the Christian's attitude toward the agony of the world, and what should his attitude be? Is this only the crisis of the non-Christian and anti-Christian world which has betrayed the Christian faith, or is it also the crisis of Christianity? Christians also share the destiny of the world. They cannot pretend that all is well with Christianity, with Christian mankind, and that nothing that happens in the world directly concerns it. A heavy responsibility is incurred by the Christian world, by the Christian movement. A judgment of the world is taking place and this means also the judgment of historical Christianity. The ailments of the present-day world are linked not only with the falling away from Christianity, with the fact of faith growing cold, but also with the old ailments of Christianity in its human aspect. Christianity is universal in its significance and everything is enclosed in its orbit, nothing can be entirely extraneous to it. And Christians must understand the spiritual state of the present-day world from Christianity itself; they must determine what the crisis of the world means as an event inside Christianity, inside Christian universality. The world is in a state of liquefaction, it no longer contains solid bodies; it is going through a revolutionary era both outwardly and inwardly, an era of spiritual anarchy. Man lives in fear (*Angst*) more than ever, he lives under a constant threat, he is suspended over an abyss (Tillich's *Grenzsituation*).

Contemporary European man has lost the faith with which in the preceding century he attempted to replace the Christian faith. He no longer believes in progress, in humanism, in salvation through science, in salvation through democracy; he realizes the injustice of the capitalist order and has

\* A lecture delivered in May, 1931, at the congress of the leaders of the Christian World Federation in Bad Boll.

lost his faith in the Utopia of the perfect social order. Modern France is devoured with cultural scepticism; in Germany, the crisis upsets all values. And all Europe is shaken by the events taking place in Soviet Russia, inspired with a new faith, a new religion, antagonistic to the Christian religion. It is characteristic for present-day Europe to witness the rise of new forms of pessimistic philosophy, compared to which Schopenhauer's pessimism appears reassuring and innocent. Such is the philosophy of Heidegger, for whom being is fallen in its very essence, yet has not fallen away from any one; the world is hopelessly sinful, yet there is no God; the essence of world-being is *Sorge*, "care."

The spiritual leader of present-day Central Europe is the melancholy, dark, tragic Kierkegaard. His teaching concerning *Angst* has grown extremely popular, it expresses the state of the world today, the condition of man. The most interesting and important movement of theological and religious thought is Barthianism, which is inspired with an exclusive and acute sense of the sinfulness of man and of the world, and conceives Christianity strictly eschatologically. This movement is a religious reaction against liberal-humanitarian, romantic Protestantism of the preceding century. A similar reaction against liberalism, romanticism, modernism is manifested in Catholicism, which is trying at present to be saved from the threat of modernism and to fortify itself by a return to St. Thomas Aquinas. Thomism is not only the official philosophy of the Catholic Church, it has become a cultural movement and inspires Catholic youth. But both Barthianism and Thomism humiliate man. The tendency toward authoritarianism and its re-establishment is the reversed aspect of the anarchy and chaos in the world. In Western Christianity there is a weakening of faith in man, in his creative force, in his task in the world.

Social and political movements are dominated by principles of authority and violence, by the limitation of man's freedom. Man seems to be weary of spiritual freedom and is ready to renounce it in the name of force which will organize his life outwardly and inwardly. Man is weary of himself and wants to lean on the superhuman, even if this superhuman is a social collectivity. Many old idols are overturned in our times, but many new idols are being created. Man is made in such a way that he can live only through faith in God or through faith in ideals and idols. Actually man can never be a confirmed and absolute atheist. When he turns away from faith in God he falls into idolatry. We behold the creation and worship of idols in all spheres—in science, in art, in political, national, and social life. Thus, for instance, communism is an extreme form of social idolatry.

## II. THE IDOL, TECHNOLOGY

The man of present-day Europe is suffering from the weakening of all faith. He is more free from optimistic illusions than the man of the nineteenth century and is placed face to face with naked, unadorned, stark reality. But in one respect contemporary man is optimistic and full of faith: he has an idol to which he sacrifices everything. Here we approach an extremely important aspect of the spiritual state of the world. Man believes today in the power of technology, of the machine; it seems at times that this is the only thing in which he believes. From this point of view there apparently exist very good reasons for his optimism. The vertiginous progress of technology in our time is a true miracle of the sinful natural world. Man is shaken and oppressed by the power of technology, which has turned his life upside down. Man has created technology himself, it is the product of his genius, of his reason, of his ingenuity, it is the child of the spirit of man. He has succeeded in unleashing the hidden forces of nature and in using them for his own aims, in bringing a teleological principle into the action of mechanical, physical, and chemical forces. But man has not been able to master the results of his task. Technology has proved stronger than man himself and has subjugated him. Technology is the only sphere of optimistic faith left to man, his only passion; but it has also brought him great bitterness and disappointment, it enslaves him, weakens his spirituality, threatens him with destruction. The crisis of our times is in considerable measure born from technology which man is unable to cope with. And this crisis is first of all a spiritual one.

It is important for the theme we have chosen to stress that Christians proved to be completely unprepared for determining the value of the machine and of technology, for the understanding of their place in life. Christian consciousness does not know how to face the immense world event linked to the introduction of technology and of the machine into human life. The natural world in which man was accustomed to live formerly no longer appears as an eternal order of things; man lives in a new world, not at all in the world in which Christian revelation was unfolded; it is not the world in which lived the apostles, the doctors of the church, the saints, and with which the symbolism of Christianity is related. Christianity appeared as intimately linked with earth, with the patriarchal order of life. But technology tore man away from earth, it completely destroyed the patriarchal way of life.

Christians can live and act in this world in which everything is con-



stantly changing, in which there is no longer anything stable, and they can do so thanks to ordinary Christian dualism. The Christian is accustomed to live according to two rhythms, the religious and the worldly. In the worldly rhythm he participates in the technicization of life which is not religiously consecrated; as to the religious rhythm, he obeys it for a few days or hours of his life, turning away from the world to God. But as yet it is not clear what this new world in formation means in the religious sense. For a long time technology was considered as the most neutral sphere, indifferent from the religious point of view, the most remote from spiritual problems, and therefore innocent. But this time is past, though all have not become aware of this. Technology has ceased to be neutral. The problem of technology has become for us a spiritual problem, a problem concerning the fate of man, his relations to God; it has an infinitely deeper meaning than is commonly believed. It has a cosmogonical meaning, it creates an entirely new reality.

We would be mistaken in believing that the reality born from technology is the old reality of the physical world, the reality studied by mechanics, physics, and chemistry. This is a reality which did not exist in the history of the world before the discoveries and inventions made by man. He has succeeded in creating a new world. The machine is not mechanics. In the machine is present the reason of man, the teleological principle is active in it. Technology creates an atmosphere saturated with energies formerly concealed in the depths of nature. And man is not sure that he will be able to breathe in this new atmosphere. He was used to breathing a different air in the past.

We do not know as yet what that electric atmosphere into which he has plunged will bring man. Technology has placed in his hands a terrible, unprecedented force, which can destroy mankind. The old instruments which man held in his hands were mere playthings. They could be considered as something neutral. But when such a terrible force has been bestowed, then mankind's destiny depends on its own spiritual state. Already the destructive machinery of war, which bears the threat of a nearly cosmic catastrophe, raises the spiritual problem of technology in all its acuteness. Technology means not only the power of man over nature, but also the power of man over man, the power exercised on the life of man. Technology can be directed to the service of God, but it can also be directed to the service of the devil. Precisely for this reason it is no longer neutral. In our materialistic age everything acquires a spiritual meaning, everything is placed under the sign of the spirit. Technology, born from the spirit,



materializes life, but it can also contribute to the liberation of the spirit, the liberation from the hold of material-organic life. It can also contribute to spiritualization.

### III. TECHNOLOGY AND THE SPIRIT

Technology means the transfer of entire human existence from organism to organization. Man no longer lives in an organic order. He was accustomed to live in an organic relation with earth, with plants and animals. The great cultures of the past were still environed by nature, they had a love for gardens, flowers, animals, they had not yet broken with nature's rhythm. The feeling of the earth gave birth to telluric mysticism (concerning which Bachofen expressed remarkable ideas). Man is born from earth and returns to earth. A deep religious symbolism is attached to this conception. Vegetative cults have played a tremendous role. The organic life of man and of human societies appeared as similar to vegetative life. The life of the family, of the corporation, of the state, was organic. Society was comparable to an organism. The romantic school of the early nineteenth century attached a special significance to the organism and to the organic; and from this school stems the idealization of all that is organic and the hostility for all that is mechanic. The organism is born and not created by man, it is the fruit of the natural, cosmic life; here the whole is not composed of parts, but precedes the parts and determines their life.

Technology tears man away from earth, transfers him to the great spaces of the universe, gives him the feeling of the planetary nature of the earth. It radically transforms man's attitude toward space and time. It is hostile to all organic incarnation. In the technological era of civilization, man ceases to live among animals and plants; he is thrust into a new, cold, metallic world, where he no longer finds any animal warmth, no warm blood. The domination of technology brings with it the weakening of the psychical element in human life, the weakening of all that is warm and reassuring, of lyrical emotions, of melancholy, which are always linked to the psychical and not to the spiritual. Technology kills all that is organic in life and places all human existence under the sign of organization. The inevitable passing from the organism to organization is one of the sources of the crisis of the present-day world. It is not easy to tear oneself away from the organic. With cold ruthlessness the machine tears away the spirit, breaks its intimate tie with organic flesh, with vegetative-animal life. And this is first of all reflected in the weakening of the purely psychical element in human life, in the disintegration of the wholeness of human feelings.

We are entering into the austere epoch of the spirit and of technology.

The psychical, linked with organic life, proved to be extremely fragile; it has shrunk under the cruel blows which are dealt to it by the machine, it is bleeding, and it may seem at times that it is dying. We perceive this as the fatal process of technicization, mechanization, materialization of life. But the spirit may resist this process, it may master it and enter the new era as a conqueror. This is the fundamental problem.

Organization, toward which the world is moving, the organization of immense human masses, the organization of the technic of life, of economy, of scientific activity, etc., weighs heavily on the human soul, on the intimate experience of the person; it gives birth to an inner religious crisis. Elements of organization existed at the very dawn of human civilization, and elements of technology were always manifest; but never was the principle of technological organization predominant and all-embracing. Many things remained in an organic, vegetative state. Organization linked to technology means the rationalization of life. But human life cannot be entirely and absolutely rationalized; there always remains an irrational element, there always remains a mystery.

The universal principle of rationalization is avenged. Rationalization which does not submit to a higher spiritual principle gives birth to irrational consequences. Thus, in economic life, we see that rationalization produces so irrational a phenomenon as unemployment. In Soviet Russia, the rationalization of life acquires forms which resemble collective madness. Universal rationalization, technological organization, which reject the mystery of the foundations of life, lead to the loss of life's old meaning, to despair and suicide. Man is carried away by the technology he has created, but he cannot himself be changed into a machine. Man is the organizer of life, but he himself cannot be in his depths the object of organization; there always remains in him an organic, irrational element, an element of mystery.

Rationalization, technicization, mechanization of man's entire life and of the human soul itself cannot but provoke a reaction. This reaction existed in the nineteenth century. The representatives of the romantic school always protested against the power of technology, which disintegrated organic wholeness; they appealed to nature, to the elemental foundations in man. Ruskin was one of the violent opponents of technology; he even refused to travel by rail, and rode in a carriage along thoroughfares running parallel to the railway tracks. The romantic reaction against technology is understandable and even necessary; but it is powerless, it does not solve the problem, or solves it too easily. The return to the old organic existence, to patriarchal relations, to old forms of rural economy and trades, to life

with nature, with earth, with plants and animals—all this has become impossible; moreover, such a return is not even desirable, for those old forms were linked to the exploitation of men and animals. Herein lies the tragedy of the situation.

It remains to the spirit alone to determine creatively its attitude to technology and to the new era; it will have to master technology in the name of its own goal. Christianity will have to determine creatively its attitude toward the new reality. It cannot be over-optimistic. Neither can it ignore stern reality. This presupposes the tension of spirituality, the strengthening of inner life. The sentimental strain of Christianity has already become impossible. Emotivity is unable to stand the sternness of reality. Only a steeled, austere spirit can be fearless. The spirit can be an organizer, it can become the master of technology and make it serve its aims, but it will resist any attempt to transform itself into an instrument of an organizing technological process. Herein lies the tragedy of the spirit.

#### IV. MASS-DEMOCRATIZATION

The other aspect of the process which determines the crisis of culture today is the entry into culture of immense human masses, the democratization which is taking place on an extremely large scale. There is in culture an aristocratic principle and a democratic one. Without the aristocratic principle, without the selection of quality, a height of perfection could never be reached. But, at the same time, culture is being widened, new social elements are continually entering its sphere. This process is just and it is inevitable. Our present-day culture has lost all its organic wholeness, all its hierarchic character in which the higher level felt its intimate link with the lower level. In the cultural élite of our time the notion of service to a suprapersonal goal, to the great whole, has vanished. The idea of service in general has been weakened since the days of the Renaissance, and predominating liberal and individualistic ideas are opposed to it. The conception of life as serving a suprapersonal goal is a religious conception; as such it is not inherent to leaders of contemporary culture. It is remarkable that the idea of suprapersonal service has once more arisen in a distorted form in Russian communism, but this suprapersonal goal has proved to be a godless one.

The cultural stratum of modern Europe has no wide and deep social basis; it is torn away from the masses who are demanding an ever greater role in social life, in the making of history. The cultured elements, humanist in their world conception, are helpless to give the masses ideas and

values capable of inspiring them. Humanist culture is fragile and cannot resist the formidable mass-processes which are overturning it. Humanist culture is induced to restrict and isolate itself. The masses easily assimilate vulgar materialism and outward technological civilization, but do not absorb higher spiritual culture; they easily pass from a religious world-conception to atheism. And this transformation is aided by painful associations, linking Christianity with the ruling classes and with the defense of an unjust social order. The masses are guided by myth-ideas, by beliefs either religious or social and revolutionary, and not by cultural-humanist ideals.

The conflict between the aristocratic and the democratic principle, between quality and quantity, height and breadth, cannot be solved on the basis of nonreligious humanism. As this conflict develops, the aristocratic cultural strata often feel as if they were dying out and condemned to perish. The process of technicization, of mechanization, and the process of mass-democratization lead to the transformation of culture into technological civilization, inspired by materialism. The fact of despoiling men of their souls, the conversion of men into machines and of man's labor into a merchandise, is a result of the industrial capitalist world, which Christianity is facing with bewilderment. The injustice of the capitalist world finds its just retribution in communism. The process of collectivization, in which the human person is doomed to vanish, has begun already in capitalism. Materialist communism only seeks to complete the task. This raises in all its acuteness before Christian conscience the social problem, the problem of a juster, more humane social order, the problem of the spiritualization of the social movement and of the working masses.

The problem of culture is today a social problem, and cannot be solved outside the social sphere. The conflict between the aristocratic and the democratic principle of culture finds its solution only on the basis of Christianity; for Christianity is both aristocratic and democratic, it asserts the dignity of the children of God, it calls man to rise, to attain perfection, to attain the highest quality; and at the same time its message is addressed to all, to every human soul. Christianity demands that life should be conceived as a service, dedicated to a suprapersonal goal, to the suprapersonal whole. The destiny of culture depends on the spiritual state of the working masses, it depends on whether these masses will be inspired with Christian faith or guided by atheist materialism; it depends on whether technology will be submitted to the spirit and to spiritual aims, or will become definitely the master of human life. It is most detrimental when Christians adopt an attitude of reaction against the movement of the work-

ing masses and against the achievements of technology, instead of spiritualizing and ennobling the processes going on in the world, and of submitting them to a higher aim.

#### V. PERSON AND SOCIETY

With the development of technological power and with mass-democratization of culture is also linked the fundamental problem raised by the crisis, and especially disturbing for Christian consciousness: the problem of the person and of society. The person striving toward emancipation is more and more oppressed by society, he grows more and more socialized, collectivized. This is the result of the "emancipating" process of technicization and democratization of life. Already the industrial capitalist order, which was founded on individualism and atomism, leads to the oppression of the person, to the impersonal, to the anonymous and collective, to the mass way of life. Materialist communism, which has risen against capitalism, definitely destroys the person, dissolves it in social collectivity, denies personal consciousness, personal conscience, personal judgment. The person, which in man is the image and semblance of God, is disintegrated, split in separate elements, loses its wholeness. This can be observed in modern art and literature, for instance in the novels of Marcel Proust. The processes now taking place in culture threaten the person with destruction.

The tragic conflict between the person and society cannot be solved on an extrareligious basis. A world which has lost its religious faith and has become dechristianized either isolates the person, tears him away from human society, imprisons him in himself without permitting him to emerge toward suprapersonal aims and communion with other men—or else, such a world without faith definitely subjects and enslaves the person to society. Christianity alone solves in principle the torturing problem of the relations between the person and society. Christianity cherishes first of all the person, the individual soul, and its immortal destiny; it does not permit the person to be considered as a means for the attainment of society's aims. Christianity recognizes the absolute value of every person. The person's spiritual life is directly linked to God and it traces the limits of society's power over the person. But, on the other hand, Christianity calls the person to a life of association with others, of service to the suprapersonal goal, to the combination of every *I* and *Thou* in the *We*, to a life of communion; one may even say to a life of communism, but entirely opposed to materialist and atheist communism. Only Christianity can defend the person against the destruction which threatens it; only on Christian ground can be achieved the inner union of the person with others, in a common association, in a com-



munion in which the person is not destroyed, but achieves on the contrary the fullness of his life.

Christianity solves the conflict of the person and of society, that conflict which has created a terrible crisis; it solves it in the sphere of the third principle, suprapersonal and suprasocial—in Godmanhood, in the body of Christ. The religious problem of the person and of society presupposes the solution of the social problem of our time in the spirit of Christian personalist socialism, which will make its own all that is just in socialism—rejecting all of it that is false, its false spirit, its false world conception, which denies not only God but also man. Only then can qualitative culture, the highest culture of the spirit, be saved.

We have no reason to be over-optimistic. Things have gone too far. Strife and hate are too powerful. Sin, evil, injustice, have won too great a victory. But the fact of stating the creative problems of the spirit, but the fulfilling of duty, must not depend on reasoning, on the measuring of the forces of evil which resist the achievement of truth. We believe that we are not alone; we believe that natural human forces, good and evil, are not the only ones active in the world; that there are also supernatural, superhuman, beneficent forces, aiding those who perform the work of Christ in the world. We believe that God acts. When we speak of "Christianity," we speak not only of man and of his faith, we speak also of God, of Christ.

## VI. THE LOSS OF ETERNITY

The technological and economic process of present-day civilization transforms the person into its instrument, demands of him unceasing activity, the application of every moment of life to action. Contemporary civilization denies contemplation, threatens to exclude it from life entirely, to render it impossible. This will finally mean that man will cease to pray, that he will no longer have any relations with God, that he will no longer behold the beautiful and know truth for truth's sake. The person is determined not only in his relation to time, but also in his relation to eternity. The actual character of present-day civilization is the negation of eternity, it is the enslavement of man to time. Not a single moment of life presents an intrinsic value, it has no relation to eternity and to God; every moment is a means to attain the next one, it must elapse as quickly as possible, to be replaced by another moment. Such an exclusively actual character modifies the relation with time—time begins to flow more rapidly, it is turned into a frenzied race. The person cannot maintain himself in this torrent of time, in this actualization of every moment; the person cannot pause to think, can-

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not grasp the meaning of his life, for this meaning can only be revealed in relation to eternity; the torrent of time is meaningless in itself.

Indubitably, man is called to action, to work, to creation; he cannot be merely contemplative. The world is not only a spectacle for man. He must transform and reorganize it, he must continue to create the world. But man remains a person, the image and semblance of God. He avoids being transformed into a means of an impersonal process of life and of society only if he represents the point of intersection of the two worlds: the world of eternity and the world of time. He remains a person if he not only acts in time, but also contemplates eternity, if he determines himself inwardly in relation to God.

This is the fundamental problem of our all-actualizing civilization, the problem of the destiny of the person, of man's destiny. Man cannot be only an object, he is a subject, he carries his own existence in himself. If he is transformed into the instrument of an impersonal, actualizing process in time, he ceases to be a man. We may thus conceive a social collectivity but not a person. In the latter, there is always something independent of the torrent of time and of the social process. If contemplative life is stifled this means the destruction of an immense part of culture, its summits and the flowering they represent—the flowering of mysticism, metaphysics, aesthetics.

A purely working, actualizing civilization will place science and art at the service of the technological process of production. We behold this already in the project of Soviet communist culture. This is indeed the depth of the cultural crisis. The future of man, the future of culture depend on whether man will desire, were it for a brief moment, to free himself, to pause to think, to grasp the meaning of his life, to lift his eyes to heaven. True, the idea of work and of a labor-society is a noble and entirely Christian idea. The aristocratic contemplation of a privileged cultural class, not taking part in the process of labor, was often a false contemplation, and will scarcely in such form have a place in future society. But every laboring man, in fact every man, has moments of contemplation, of retiring into his own depths, moments of prayer and praise of God, when he beholds the beautiful and knows the world through disinterested knowledge.

Contemplation and action must be combined and their combination alone confirms and fortifies the person. He who dissipates himself entirely in action exhausts himself, the flow of spiritual energy is checked in him. Moreover, activity is generally not understood in the evangelical sense, not as placed at the service of our neighbor, but as a worship of idols. The

liturgical cycle of religious life is an original combination of contemplation and action, in which the person can find for himself a source of fortitude and of energy.

We are witnessing the fatal process of the transformation of the person, which is always the image of the highest being, into collectivity created in time and demanding an incessantly growing activity. Man is a creative being, in other words, he is the Creator's image. But the activeness which our civilization demands of man is essentially the negation of his creative nature; for it is the negation of man himself. Human creativeness presupposes the combination of contemplation and action. The very distinction between contemplation and action is relative. The spirit is essentially active, and there is a dynamic element in contemplation. We approach the ultimate problem linked to the spiritual state of the present-day world, to the problem of man, as a religious issue. For the crisis of man is taking place in the world, not only the crisis in man, but the crisis of man himself. His subsequent existence becomes problematical.

## VII. THE REJECTION OF MAN

The crisis of man must be grasped in an inward Christian sense. Only inside Christianity can that which is taking place be understood. In our civilization, the Christian idea of man has been shaken, an idea which had been still preserved in humanism. At the basis of Christianity lies the myth of Godmanhood, the theoandric myth (I use the word "myth" not in a sense opposed to reality; on the contrary, it corresponds more closely to reality than does the concept)—the myth of God and the myth of man, of the image and semblance of God in man, of the incarnation of the Son of God. The dignity of man was linked with Godmanhood.

The fullness of Christian theoandric revelation was grasped with difficulty by sinful human nature, and the Christian teaching concerning man was not sufficiently unfolded, was not revealed in life. Therefore the phenomenon of humanism was to grow inevitably on Christian soil. But there further developed a process whose consequences were to be fatal. It was the intellectual destruction and the destruction in life of the wholeness of the theoandric Christian myth. First was rejected one-half—the myth of God. There still remained the second half—the myth of man, the Christian idea of man. We see this in Feuerbach. He rejected God, but retained God's likeness, man; he did not as yet make an attempt on man, just as this attempt has not been made by those humanists who preserve the eternal nature of man.

But the destruction of the Christian theoandric myth made another step forward; it was marked not only by an apostasy from God, but also from man. Marx made an attempt on man, and so did Nietzsche. For Marx the highest value was not man, but social collectivity. Man is eliminated by the class and a new myth is created, the messianism of the proletariat. Marx is one of the results of humanism. For Nietzsche, the highest value is not man, but superman, the master race; man must be overcome. Nietzsche is the other result of humanism. Thus we behold the renunciation of the value of man, the last value which has survived from Christianity. We observe this for instance in such social phenomena as racism, fascism, communism, national idolatry, and international idolatry. We are entering an era of civilization which rejects the value of man. The supreme value of God had been previously rejected. This is the essence of the crisis of our time.

### VIII. THE SALVATION OF MAN

The processes of technicization, the processes of the absorption of the person by society and of collectivization, are all linked to this crisis. All the heresies which arose throughout the history of Christianity, all the negations of the fullness and wholeness of truth, raised serious and significant issues which have not been solved and must be solved by Christianity from within. But the heresies born from our civilization are completely different from the heresies of the first centuries of Christianity; they are not theological heresies, but heresies of life itself. They bear witness to the fact that there are urgent questions which must be answered by Christianity from within. The problems of technology, of the just organization of social life, problems of collectivization in their relation to the eternal value of the human person, have not been solved from within Christianity, in the light of Christian theoandric truth. Man's creative activity in the world has not been consecrated. The crisis taking place in our time is a reminder to Christianity concerning unsolved problems; therefore this crisis is not only a judgment on the godless world, but also a judgment on Christianity.

The fundamental problem of our days is not the problem of God, as many think, and as is often believed by Christians pleading for a religious revival; the fundamental issue of our days is first of all the problem of man. The problem of God is eternal, it belongs to all times, it will always be first and foremost; but the problem of our time is the problem of man, of saving man, saving the human person from disintegration; it is the calling and destiny of man which is at stake, the solution of the crucial questions related to society and culture in the light of the Christian idea of man.

Humanity has rejected God, but so doing, it has cast doubt not on the dignity of God, but on the dignity of man, who cannot maintain himself without God. For humanity, God is precisely that highest idea—that reality which builds man. The reverse aspect of this fact is that man is God's highest idea. Only Christianity solves the problem of man's relations with God; only in Christ the image of man is saved, only in the Christian spirit can a society and a culture be created which do not destroy man. But truth must be realized in life.

*Editor's Note:* RELIGION IN LIFE is indebted to Miss Hélène Iswolsky, of the editorial staff of the religious-philosophical publications of *The Third Hour*, for translation of this article from the Russian.

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## Two Concepts of Death

JOSEPH GERARD BRENNAN

*The "humanist" or naturalist attitude toward death is considered more "scientific" than the religious view—yet it obscures death's tragedy with sentimental optimism.*

AT THE ENTRANCE to one of New York City's great motor parkways, gleams a sign listing the vehicles banned from the six broad lanes of the superroad. Prominent on the metal placard is the uncompromising legend, NO HEARSEs. Idly, one wonders why. That bicycles, baby carriages, and ice-cream wagons should be interdicted one can understand. But hearses, now. Why? Perhaps because legally they are "commercial" vehicles, a sort of truck hauling a load, though of a somewhat special kind. Or maybe because they tend to obstruct traffic. The speeds on the superhighway are posted at different points as 35, 40, and 50 miles per hour. A hearse would either be compelled to maintain a speed altogether out of keeping with its solemn function, or, if it proceeded at a slower pace, would impede the honking flock behind. Again, perhaps a solicitous highway commissioner, aware of the dedication of the road to "pleasure vehicles," has taken this means thoughtfully to prevent a sad reminder of man's mortality from disturbing the "pleasure" of the grim-faced motorists as they race by one another in their machines of steel and chrome.

This last inference may be the least valid of the three. Nevertheless, the official banning of hearses from superhighway travel would be in complete harmony with the obscurantism practiced today not only toward the outward trappings of death, but toward death itself.

An extreme manifestation of this obscurantism (so exaggerated that it has been explained by one critic as "Angeleno" rather than American) is the huge California cemetery known as "Forest Lawn." This singular burial ground so astonished a recent English visitor, Mr. Evelyn Waugh, that he wrote a novel about it. So painfully funny is the scalpel-edged satire of *The Loved One* (Hollywood euphemism for a dead man) that the reader is apt in his amusement to overlook the fact that Waugh's mortuary romance is essentially the protest of a moralist against a phenomenon of decadence. Forest Lawn is rapidly becoming one of the show places of the nation. Despite its relatively recent construction, it has

already achieved a status only slightly below that of a national park. With some reason. All that is dark, all that is disturbing in death has been banished from this supercemetery. The newly deceased is given a masterful cosmetic treatment, then laid on a silken sofa in one of the "Slumber Rooms" where gather the friends who wish to bid a last and cheerful farewell. The glorified body is then gently deposited somewhere within the confines of the cemetery's carefully groomed acres—perhaps at "Eventide" or "Vesperland"—while cunningly concealed amplifiers discourse electrically transcribed music—perhaps "Mighty Lak a Rose" or "The Indian Love Call." Strategically placed pieces of cheerful statuary, such as the elfishly grinning "Duck Baby," co-operate in maintaining the tone of determined optimism. The ethos of Forest Lawn is Life, not Death.

A more restrained but no less confident optimism concerning death exudes from a recently published booklet by Mr. Corliss Lamont titled *A Humanist Funeral Service*.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lamont's particular brand of humanism supports the metaphysical view that man, like everything else in nature, is a consilium of atoms, that death is nothing more than the return of those atoms to other arrangements within "This great and eternal Nature . . . in which we ever live and move and have our being." A suitable funeral service for those who hold this metaphysical belief, feels Mr. Lamont, will fill a gap long felt by reasonable people.

The humanist funeral service is brief. First, there are some musical selections to be played while people are gathering for the ceremony. Rubinstein's *Kamennoi Ostrov* and the "Meditation" from *Thais* are among the pieces suggested as appropriate. The service proper opens with a meditation to be read by "the person in charge." The mourners are invited to think on the wonder of nature and of man, and of the inevitability of death. Life and death, they are told, are but different and necessary aspects of the same evolutionary process. Death is no evil, and a reasonable man will not fear it. After this Lucretian invocation, there is more music—this time "Morning" from Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite*. There follows a reading of Corinthians 13:1-8, 13, without, of course, any allusion to St. Paul's more supernaturalist convictions. Another meditation submits that the answer to death is the affirmation of life, all to the greater glory of Man. John Masefield's poem "The Passing Strange" is then read, with no reference to the peculiar ambiguity of the title, and the service draws to a close with the playing of a portion of Brahms' First Symphony.

<sup>1</sup> The Beacon Press, Boston, 1947

Mr. Lamont's humanism appears to be of a somewhat special and evangelical brand. But the attitude toward death revealed by his funeral service indicates an interesting continuity with certain phases of a naturalistic humanism associated with the nineteenth century. This doctrine, rooted in the Enlightenment, declared faith in the power of human reason, trust in science, sociology, and bourgeois progress. It viewed death officially as part and parcel of life, and opposed as reactionary fanaticism any tendency to conceive of it as a power distinct from life. Thomas Mann, a humanist in a sense very different from Mr. Lamont's meaning of the term, has put down a masterly and ironic analysis of this doctrine in his novel *The Magic Mountain*. Settembrini, the Italian encyclopedist in that work, is a champion of science, progress, reason and humanity. Awe in the face of death, he thinks, is nothing but a relic of primitive superstition, of clerical fanaticism. In rhapsodic tones he speaks of the great cemetery of the future (a surprisingly accurate forecast of Forest Lawn) where a modern crematory and vault for urns would be supplemented by a Hall of Life, where architecture, painting, sculpture, music and poetry would combine to draw the thoughts of the survivors from the contemplation of death, from weak and unavailing grief, and fix them on the joys of life. Settembrini is only momentarily discomfited when his enemy Naphta sourly mocks him:

On with the dance! . . . Don't let them make too much of the funeral rites, don't let them pay too much respect to such a simple fact as death—but without that simple fact, there would never have been either architecture nor painting, sculpture nor music, poetry nor any other art.

The popular metaphysical opinion that, since man is a part of nature, such phenomena as life, mind, value and purpose are explicable within the framework of nature conceived in a physical sense has arguments to support it that are not without strength. That the structure of protoplasm, the nature of thought have thus far eluded laboratory analysis is in itself no reason to believe that they will continue to do so. Schrödinger may well be right in his contention that life is *au fond* an aperiodic crystal. Loyalty to what is called "scientific method" has produced some of the greatest triumphs of the human spirit, and hostility toward that method has too often resulted in darkness and confusion. It is indeed most "unscientific" to postulate a soul or some other spiritual entity (the nature and existence of which is declared *ex hypothesi* to be unamenable to experimental verification), simply in order to explain certain elusive properties of the higher forms of life. The Logical Positivists, more cautious than the old-fashioned "reductionist"

materialists, show admirable metaphysical prudence, if not daring, when, queried on the immortality of the soul, they denounce such questions as meaningless because there exists no means of experimental verification by which the answer could be given.

Nevertheless, even if one admits to this point of view its due respect, and grants for the sake of argument that death can be regarded simply as the return of those physical elements which once composed a man to simpler arrangements in nature, why does it follow that one must be so cheerful about it all? The "humanistic" view of human dissolution seems to convey the suggestion that to a reasonable and scientifically enlightened man, death is not only pointless, it is practically painless as well. Yet it is curious to note the need of this scientific stand on human mortality to eke itself out on the edge of the grave with uplifting music and optimistic poetry. The *Humanist Funeral Service* lists eighteen alternate musical selections ranging from the Londonderry Air<sup>2</sup> to Wagner's "Love-Death" from *Tristan*, and about as many poetic excerpts, including Bryant's *Thanatopsis*, Henley's *Margueritae Sorori*, as well as assorted bits of Rupert Brooke, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Carl Sandberg.

From Lucretius to the present, injunctions to be serene and cheerful at the time of death have rung a little hollow because the phenomenon of human dissolution is so conspicuously at odds with serenity and cheer. It is somewhere near this point that the whole "humanistic" thesis fails to square with "experience," that category valued so highly as a criterion of truth by the naturalistic philosophers. Experience does not confirm that death is a lying-down to pleasant dreams *à la Thanatopsis*. Experience, even gross sense experience, testifies that death is terrible. It is terrible to watch whether in the sick room or on the battlefield, whether the victim be a child or an old man. Even the death of a stranger is sore to look upon, save perhaps for a physician who is hardened to it by practice. It may be that a merciful narcosis dulls the suffering of the dying man, but it does not always seem so. It seems rather that, in T. S. Eliot's phrase, "the soul leaves the body torn and bruised." When a loved one dies, the terror is multiplied. A world of talk about how natural it all is avails little in that pinch. Henley's verse about the dying man being gathered to the quiet west with a late lark singing in his heart has nothing to do with the agony of death, and consequently nothing to do with reality.

<sup>2</sup> This old Irish song, sometimes titled by its first line "Would to God I Were a Tender Apple Blossom!" is peculiarly appropriate to the obsequies of one whose constituent elements will shortly be rearranged in Nature to form perhaps that very floral configuration.

People of another day believed that death was terrible and despite their frequent faith in some sort of beneficent Spirit and blessed future life, acted as if it were terrible. They surrounded death with a meticulous etiquette, behaved formally in its presence. They tried to communicate their conviction of death's importance and dignity by decking it out with ornaments and solemn pomp. The coach of gilt and black which bore the corpse was drawn by sable horses driven by coachmen in starched collars and top hats, and as the sad parade moved slowly and without shame through the public streets, the passers-by uncovered or bowed their heads as they made respectful way.

Today reasonable people consider such behavior disreputable, seeing in it only the vestiges of a discredited belief that death is an entity separate from life, a power in its own right. Awe in the presence of death seems to the enlightened but a relic of an old superstitious belief in a dualism of body and spirit, and, as such, bound up with a host of undesirable associations—asceticism, supernaturalism, fanaticism, terror. Man is an organism continuous with nature, he is not an external spectator of nature. Let us exorcise the ghosts of old dualisms. So reads the canon of contemporary naturalism.

That man is an organism continuous with nature may be admitted without demur. But it does not follow that therefore man cannot be a spectator of nature too. If he were not the latter as well as the former, there would be no philosophy, nor science either. Organism continuous with nature, yet apart from her—in this dual cosmic role lies the glory and tragedy of man. Christianity at least takes some account of that dualism. And if in seeking an interpretation of the human predicament one must choose between certain basic elements in the Christian tradition and a naturalistic formulation which (being in hands less able than Mr. Dewey's) amounts to little more than the "science" of Flaubert's druggist Homais, then one can hardly do more than appeal to a certain sense of adequacy to determine the choice.

It is one thing to find wanting the particular sets of symbols which have developed at various points within the Christian tradition. It is quite another to assert that Christianity in no way at all implies a recognition of how things actually are with man. Particularly man confronted by death. Here, the Christian interpretation is on the side of human instinct. We do not refer, in this connection, to any "instinct for immortality." We mean an awareness arising from the tensions of a polarity deep in human nature (at the moment psychologists make much of the "feeling of insecurity"), an intuition of darkness, aloneness, and the abyss.



*Death is an enemy.* So said Augustine, and so the Christian tradition has proclaimed it, except where that tradition has been corrupted by bourgeois sentimentalism. It is the personal and catastrophic import of death, its "existential" aspect if you will, that has impact on human experience. This significant side of death Christian tradition has recognized. The other side is "science"; and the scientific treatment of death as an incident, as a natural stage in the evolutionary process, as the dissolution of a society of molecules into simpler patterns within nature, represents no more than a high abstraction, floating above and out of contact with the bowels of the situation. Read William James in this context:

In spite of the appeal which this impersonality of the scientific attitude makes to a certain magnanimity of temper, I believe it to be shallow, and I can now state my reason in comparatively few words. That reason is that, so long as we deal with the cosmic and the general, we deal only with the symbols of reality, but as soon as we deal with private and personal phenomena as such, we deal with realities in the completest sense of the term.<sup>3</sup>

No, it is not against religious deportment in the presence of death that the charge of obscurantism should be brought—not against etiquette and Spanish formality, nor knightliness and reverence. Rather should the charge be lodged against the Hollywood concept of death with its Slumber Rooms and Eventides, against the "humanist" concept of death with its atoms, its "gracious sun" and "gentle earth," its Pollyanna verse and sentimental music. The publicists of these notions are the real obscurantists, for they lie about death. And who lies about death, lies about life. Even the simple sea-burial of a humble sailor—the embarrassed captain holding a prayerbook in unaccustomed hands, the crew standing at awkward attention—even this puts to shame, as far as acknowledgment of the realities of the situation is concerned, all the smooth covering-up of death by Hollywood's cosmetics and superconcrete vaults, all the humanist's cheerful atomics.

Perhaps Spinoza is right when he says "There is nothing over which a free man ponders less than death; his wisdom is to meditate not on death, but on life." This is an admirable maxim, reasonable, and conducive to confidence in life. Yet it might still be that in the end death, the enemy, is less terrible to those who have looked him in the face and have not denied that his visage is dark.

<sup>3</sup> *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 498.

# The Language of the Faith

CHARLES D. KEAN

*Christianity is a language, its symbolism enabling us to approach our basic problems, death and moral lack, and to express our fundamental fellowship.*

IN THE COURSE of my education, I was taught French from kindergarten on up through high school. Yet when I spent one summer in France with all this background in the language, I found that while I was able to converse with people, I could only with difficulty make out what French people were saying when I overheard them talking to each other. My knowledge of French was acquired, pasted on, superficial at best. The Frenchmen I overheard were speaking their idiom—which means not only using figures of speech, but speaking in terms of their daily needs, their daily life. My French was a skill I had mastered to some extent. Their French was the normal channel through which their living personalities related themselves to each other and to their problems.

It is one thing to speak a language with a technical command of its vocabulary and its construction. It is quite another thing to use that language as the natural expression of one's selfhood. Students of language have always known the distinction, and so the expression is used, "learning to think in French" (or Spanish or German), as the contrast to using some other people's tongue to express ideas which are thought in English and then translated. Until a person can think in French, so to speak, he cannot really communicate with Frenchmen, soul to soul.

One of the tragic aspects of returning to a college reunion, or going back to the town where one grew up, and looking up old friends, is that so often a person has little to say to people with whom he was once on the most intimate terms. The reminiscent relationship wears thin pretty quickly. The thought one has, and the thoughts of one's former friends, are the results of living in situations in which the others have not shared. It is as if we emerged from separate universes—where each used the same grammar, but where the interests and affections and fears of each of us derived their significance from contexts to which all but the speaker was a stranger. Therefore, it is not surprising that we have little to say to each other at reunions with people whose ways have parted widely from ours. Not even

the blood relationship overcomes the gulf of the spirit. It is as if we spoke different languages.

Communication between people demands more than a currency of nouns and verbs in which each shares. Communication between people demands the meeting of spirits so that the freight carried by the words can be picked up and unloaded. It is only when there is such a meeting of spirits that we can ask and answer questions with mutuality, since it is only then that each participant in a conversation knows what the other is talking about—knows not only in substance, but in depth.

Culture is the development of a community of spiritual relationships shared by a number of people so that communication between them is not only possible but natural. The existence of any culture rests upon the pre-suppositions that there are certain questions about life common to all the members of that culture, and certain directions, likewise common, in which the answers may be sought. Within the pattern of a common outlook of shared experience, of idiomatic expressions arising from the spiritual and physical hunger of the group, of conditions of customs and conduct passed down as a common heritage, men use a language as the natural means of communicating their ideas, their needs, and their discoveries to each other.

Christianity is a language, in the sense that any religion must enable its adherents to express coherently their needs, their aspirations, and their basis of fellowship with one another. The ritual customs, creeds, and codes of conduct of any religion become significant as vehicles by which the members of that faith interpret life's meaning for themselves, relate themselves to the larger world around them, and describe their understanding of the common nature and destiny of mankind. To the extent that the religious formulations of a faith enable the adherents to do these things in the living context of historical problems, to that extent the religion in question is vital. To the extent that the formulations of the faith do not serve this purpose clearly and articulately, to that extent the religion in question cannot fulfill the function of religion.

It is my contention that Christianity has become today a foreign language to most people. In a fundamental sense it has always been a foreign language, since its description of life's meaning is one which men must acquire at a price if they are to be able to use it. They cannot be born into it. They cannot simply appropriate it from the environment. The Protestant tradition has always realized that Christianity is a foreign language. Hence the service of Holy Baptism, which is, among other things, a kind of naturalization ceremony. Yet just as the forms of naturalization do not by

themselves make a man think himself into American culture, neither does the rite of Holy Baptism by itself make the Christian gospel the language by which the recipient describes life's meaning to himself. The sacrament, however, is still the earnest of that community of faith which speaks the Christian language and understands itself in so speaking.

Christianity has become a foreign language today, however, in the fact that the prevailing culture has less and less contact with its tradition, and makes less use of the symbols of Christianity, even in corrupted form, to express its own meaning. An interesting illustration of this fact is that in the last "Veiled Prophet Parade" in St. Louis, when there was a series of floats on the common theme of the holidays of the year, Easter was depicted by the Easter bunny. It is not a question of whether the heart of the Cross and Resurrection as descriptions of life's meaning could ever be portrayed adequately on a float, but that our modern culture has inherited Easter as a day which has a few personal immortality associations and the tradition of going to a church service then if at no other time, but otherwise the day has had to be given meanings which have nothing whatsoever to do with its Christian meaning. Underneath this fact is the more important reality that modern culture and the Christian gospel do not speak the same language, hence it is not surprising that Easter in Christian terms is largely incomprehensible to most people today.

A stylized kind of Christianity has been the ethical *lingua franca* of Western civilization for approximately 1,500 years, in the sense that men have understood the moral demands placed upon individuals and society in terms derived from Christianity, the religion. There has always existed a vital core of people whose appreciation of the religious aspect was personal and deep, and whose fellowship with each other provided the world with a small but effective creative force, and this core has served to keep the ethical *lingua franca* fresh and somewhat relevant. During recent generations, however, this kind of Christianity appears to have lost much of its strength; not that men are less sensitive to moral questions, but that they have come to phrase their moral needs and answers in different terms—perhaps less adequate terms from our point of view, but different just the same.

The great problem of Christianity in the modern world is that it appears to men to be giving answers to questions they are not asking, and hence it seems relatively meaningless. And this lack of correspondence between question and answer is largely the result of a lack of common idiom, so that Christianity appears to offer senseless answers to a world with real

questions, since neither the world nor the faith understand what the other is talking about.

The problem is not simply one of difference in language, however, but one of the adequacy of language. One of the functions of any tongue is to enable the speaker to express himself, and the modern unchristian world has increasingly greater difficulty in articulating its questions. It is not only that questions and answers cannot be fitted together unless people understand each other. It is also the fact that questions and answers cannot be fitted together unless the questions themselves are sufficiently real and penetrating.

The evangelical task in our modern world, therefore, is to make Christianity available not simply as the answer to man's problems but primarily as the basis upon which he understands the questions involved in them. It is a hopeless task to offer Christian answers to a world which does not ask Christian questions; and without the asking of Christian questions the application of ethical criteria to proposed solutions for specific issues—like world peace, industrial order, race harmony, family stability—is confused. The attempt to apply answers prematurely is the cause of much futility in church work.

The evangelical task in our modern world is primarily to make Christianity available as the spiritual language through which and in which men may express themselves, may discover their community, may share their hopes and fears and loves and hates, and may ask questions sufficiently penetrating and accurate to warrant a Christian answer. In other words, such an evangelical task is a prerequisite to relating the Christian Gospels to the individual and social needs of the modern world.

The language is available, but to the modern world it seems to be irrelevant. The great doctrinal statements of the faith, the heritage of the Holy Scriptures, and the corpus of liturgical acts seem to the secular world not only to be so much Greek, but a Greek not worth learning. This is because so many spokesmen for the faith have assumed that its language was literal and objective rather than symbolic and dynamic, and the man in the street has largely come to believe that the church expects him to accept and use this language that way. For one practical example, the use of the word "Christ" in much traditional teaching effectively sterilizes it for creative spiritual functions. The word "Christ" can only be part of a living, spiritual language if it is understood to raise a question of *me*—is this Jesus to whom it refers my Christ or not?—in the sense that I am called upon to decide whether my own life is reorientated, and my relationships to other



people clarified, by contact with him. To present the word "Christ" as a metaphysical concept to people who have not submitted themselves to judgment before the Cross is to provide answers in a foreign tongue to questions they are not asking.

Again, to follow up on the same illustration, such an understanding of the meaning of the word "Christ" seems to involve an emotional or sentimental appreciation of Jesus which appears to be rather foreign to the way many people think and act. And because it seems to be emotional and sentimental, it seems unrelated to the hard realities of living adjustments. The word "Christ," therefore, can only be part of a living spiritual language if it is understood to raise this question of me—not in the abstract, not simply in an objective sense as if it were eliciting an opinion from me about Jesus, but in the hard, immediate, practical context of the decisions I must make in the course of practical living. When I am confronted with a specific choice in thought and action, or when the group of which I am a part, and with which I have identified myself, is embarking upon a program, Jesus as the Christ becomes an issue in the real sense that I am asked whether the Cross is the lens, so to speak, through which I look at my own relationship to the problem or to the group. To present the word "Christ" as an emotional reaction to people who do not ask that kind of question, or who, if they do, use it as evasion of decisions, is to provide answers in a foreign tongue to the questions they are not asking.

If it is learned functionally, so that people use it to describe living situations naturally and obviously, the language of the Christian faith is capable of serving with tremendous power as the means of articulating the hope and the community of living men and women in the modern world—because it provides the most penetrating and accurate descriptions possible. This is equivalent to "thinking in French." This is the functional use of both language and religion. As a matter of fact, an inherited religion which is not consciously used in this manner will always be found to be supplemented or supplanted in practice by some other religion in terms of which people really ask their questions and find their answers.

The Western world has two pervasive languages, usually found in some kind of unstable combination, which actually serve people as the means of expressing themselves and communicating with others. One is the language of economics, in which man's earning capacity, his assets, and his relationship to the whole productive enterprise, directly and indirectly, are the basis of self-understanding and of evaluating his relationship to social processes. The other is the language of science, in which the mastery

of theoretically objectified data becomes the basis for self-interpretation and communication. Both of these languages serve certain real functions, but neither by itself, nor in combination with the other, is able to provide an adequate statement of the problem of individual and social life. Yet both are used, not only to describe technical matters, but as the spiritual language by which men try to understand their own destinies. The proof of their inadequacy is in the demonstrated inability of the Western world to come to grips with the basic problems of world peace and economic stability in these postwar years—which is an indication that the language men are accustomed to use does not permit them to ask functionally the most relevant questions.

The language of the Christian faith cannot supplant these others, nor reduce them to idiomatic subservience, until men discover the impasse to which they have been led by a lack of adequate symbolism. The fact of the matter is that modern men and women rarely see the connection between the problem of Death, of which they are all too painfully aware, and the practical problems of family, community, national and world affairs. Just as they find difficulty in appreciating the meaning of the problem of death in its spiritual, psychological, and social aspects, likewise they find difficulty in grasping the connection between their sense of Moral Lack and their daily problems. Death is the dimension in which the inevitable and irrevocable nature of all individual decisions and social actions is to be understood, while Moral Lack is the dimension in which the incompleteness, failures, and deliberate mischoices in man's individual and social background complicate his present situation.

Because men and women do not realize that they are really asking the questions of Death and Moral Lack in the course of trying to come to grips with their individual and social problems, they find themselves experimenting with half-answers to half-questions, and they are left frustrated and unsatisfied. It does no good, however, to present the Christian tradition as the answer to men and women who are trying to discover the meaning of family life in a world of centrifugal forces, who are trying to discover an adequate vocational basis for their work in a world of collectivized and mechanized processes, who are trying to realize a stable sense of community in a world of great conflicting powers, and who are trying to plan for their children in a world of economic confusion. It is only as men and women discover, in the course of facing these problems, that they are asking the underlying questions of their own death and their own moral lack, as the ultimate and inescapable judgments upon all their tentative solutions, that

they are in a position where the Christian gospel is related to their lives as a pertinent language. But then it must be a symbolic and dynamic gospel, not a literalized and objective set of theoretical opinions.

To understand the Resurrection, for instance, not just as an opinion about what happened to Jesus after the crucifixion, but as the religious description of how the man of faith may be reborn in the changing situations of actual life, is to find strength and power for daily living. To see that this symbol is not a promise of personal immortality, but rather the affirmation that the man whose autonomy has been crucified knows freedom from fear, is to make the Resurrection available for real people in a real world. Actually such an understanding, not in these words but in actual fact, is demonstrated by every successful marital adjustment, since the young man and young woman have to die to their previous self-sufficiency in order to be reborn as partners.

To understand the Church, not just as an organization with approximately two thousand years of history, and with a certain kind of continuity in its administration, but as the living fellowship where the Resurrection is known in experience, releases that term for practical use in the modern world. Appreciating the Church as the fellowship of faith in which men and women transcend through their unity of spirit the actual historical divisions between them is to change the meaning of those divisions of race and class and nation and educational background. Such an understanding of the term "Church" makes it available for use in facing the problems of a broken world.

The Trinity is obviously a doctrine which is either an abstract description of God and the universe or is a picture of our own personal relationships to the most vital concerns of life. As a theoretical speculation about the Godhead, it may illustrate an unusual grasp of logic, but it does not endow us with the sense of urgency and the power necessary to live adequately in the real world. It does not, except by way of ethical deductions, relate me to other people around me and to history as a whole. On the other hand, when I recognize the fact that contact with Jesus as my Christ transforms my understanding of myself and my relationship to everyone and everything else in terms of inner meaning, then I live in a different world. For the Christian, knowing Jesus as the Christ transforms the nature of the demands upon him from those of just a God of judgment to those of a God of redeeming love, since he feels himself living in a benign universe even though he still has real and difficult problems to face. For the Christian, this awareness is accompanied by the realization that he can, by faith, be associated in transcendent fellowship with those who share that faith, so

that together they may face the great tasks of life. When all this is recognized, the Trinity is the practical symbol of the way Christians understand their problems and their relationship to these issues, and the way they are empowered to meet them.

To do justice to these great doctrines of the Christian tradition would require a much fuller treatment; but what has been said is perhaps sufficient to illustrate the functional approach to the Christian faith. It may be countered that this is "sheer subjectivism," and that the entire issue of the objectivity of God is not dealt with. To this it must be replied that we are dealing with religion, not philosophy, and that the religious premise in the last analysis is a matter of life, not of abstractions. Religion is concerned with empowering men to live, and pointing the directions by which they may go. Not only Christianity but all religions attempt to do this and their theories about the universe are means to an end, not ends in themselves.

It is true, however, that our understanding of life—regardless of the theory to which we subscribe—cannot be spun out of our private, inward dreams, even if we are deliberately trying to do so. A faith is the result of the interaction between man and his world, where he confronts the given from the moment of birth and on. It is one thing, however, to speculate about this "given" as if it were something remote, over against us, which we could understand at least partially by means of systems of thought. It is quite another thing to be aware of the significance in terms of the meaning of one's relationship to one's world, so that one is enabled to live vitally and realistically. For the religious man, speculations about God are beside the point if they do not relate him specifically and concretely to the raw facts of living—his home, his community, his employment, his nation, and his world.

The questions a man asks about God, about the universe, about systems of thought and analysis, are significant questions; not just in themselves, but as reflections of the way the questioner is trying to come to terms with the problem of Death and Moral Lack, which psychologically and spiritually undercut his pretensions at every moment of crisis in his life. The answer he needs is one which allows him to face these questions frankly. The Christian gospel provides both a language in which these questions may be expressed profoundly, and the means of finding realistic answers in the course of practical living.

# Some Thoughts on the Christian Hope

CYRIL C. RICHARDSON

*"Our earthly life is but an incident in a larger destiny whose end is that we should enjoy God forever"—this is the basic meaning of the Christian hope.*

IN THIS ESSAY I have attempted a very brief interpretation of the classic symbols of the Christian hope. Because I have made little reference to the historical development of Christian thinking on these large issues or to the many prevailing opinions, I may here indicate one or two of the best works on the subject: John Baillie, *And the Life Everlasting*, Scribner's, 1933 (a well-written account of the roots and meaning of the doctrine of eternal life from a liberal viewpoint); Friedrich Von Hügel, *Eternal Life*, Scribner's, 1913 (one of the ablest treatments, both historical and theological, by a liberal Roman Catholic). There is an important series of essays by B. H. Streeter and others, entitled *Immortality*, Macmillan, 1917. Other significant works are: A. E. Taylor, *The Christian Hope of Immortality*, Macmillan, 1946; and H. B. Swete, *The Life of the World to Come*, Macmillan, 1917. The formal Roman Catholic doctrine is summarized in Vol. II of Wilhelm and Scannell's *Manual of Catholic Theology*, 1935 (pp. 535-560). An excellent little introduction to the material from psychical research bearing on survival is by H. F. Saltmarsh, *Evidence of Personal Survival from Cross Correspondences*, Oxford, 1938. Two articles by Dr. Gardiner Murphy in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, January and April, 1945, are also worthy of attention.

## I. THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN HOPE

The Christian story about the life after death only has meaning to those who are already believers. It is a necessary inference from basic Christian convictions and experiences, and it cannot be proven apart from these. There is no way of establishing the truth of the Christian hope except on the grounds of our faith in God and the meaning we give to our present life. If God is such that he cares eternally for his creatures, if love is the ground of our being and the meaning of our existence, it is impossible to conceive of death as final extinction. What we already enjoy in our relation to God through Christ and the church cannot be viewed as transitory. It is the present experience of being reconciled to God and of knowing



his nature through Christ that carries within it the conviction that the power of death has been broken. The quality of life we now enjoy is a foretaste of what will finally be revealed; and only if the whole Christian life itself were a vast deception, would it be possible to tell any other story about our final destiny.

The Christian assurance arises from the experience of the Holy Spirit as power. We find our lives changed, and we know the change was not of our own doing. New life emerges in a way we could never anticipate. We find we can love, where formerly we knew only fear and hate: we find we can triumph over self-defeating ways of life, to which we once believed ourselves enslaved. We discover a Power beyond us, living in and through us, prompting our actions and moulding our thoughts. This is the mystery of conversion—our entrance into the life in Christ. By this we catch a glimpse of creation as not bounded by mechanical and psychological laws, but ever open to transformation by God. We become new beings, and this leads us to the conviction that all creation can share in this newness of life, which transcends the limitations of mortal existence.

It is important to realize that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, attested in the Gospels and in St. Paul, is not a general proof of immortality. The appearances of Christ were to believers *only*: he did not manifest himself to all, as if to make a public demonstration of the victory over death. The truth of the Risen Christ is dependent upon faith: it is not the ground of our faith in an afterlife.

Furthermore, we cannot reach the Christian hope through a philosophic analysis of the nature of the soul. The most that discipline can establish is the hypothesis that *something* continues after death. But what it is, and what sort of life is enjoyed, cannot be concluded. Nor can we arrive at the Christian story through psychical research. All that is known from such investigation is that some "psychic factor" survives the death of the body. But between this information, useful and important as it is, and the Christian hope there is a great gulf fixed. Even if the Spiritualist is right in claiming that some communication with the dead is possible (a view for which there is weighty, though not indisputable, evidence), this would lead the Christian no further in his faith. For what is important to him is not the possibility of survival, or even of messages from the dead, but the conviction that life after death is of the same kind and quality as that now enjoyed through the Holy Spirit.

This, then, is the essence of the Christian hope: that our earthly life is but an incident in a larger destiny whose end is that we should enjoy God forever even as he eternally cares for his creation.

To express the many facets involved in this basic assurance, Christian faith has told a story. It is clothed in symbolic language, for it attempts to express the inexpressible, to speak of a life of which we only know in principle, but of whose details we can grasp nothing. All that we know and can describe is necessarily bounded by our perception of our life here. Of a life hereafter, different from the life in this mortal body, we have no direct information, for our present human awareness is mediated through our bodily senses. Hence we must have recourse to a story, a "myth" in its classical sense. Through symbols we attempt to give an account of the hereafter on the basis of the meaning we give to our present existence.

To do this Christianity uses a variety of symbols which have come down in the tradition of the faith. We speak of the Coming of Christ, the Millennium, the Resurrection of the Body, the Kingdom of God, and of Purgatory and Hell. The meaning of these symbols is very often perplexing to laity because they have frequently suffered distortion in Christian history. It is necessary, therefore, to say something of their misinterpretation and then to consider how we should think of them.

## II. MISINTERPRETATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS

The Christian story is open to two grave misunderstandings. It can be taken literally and it can be resolved into rationalistic concepts. Both of these fail to do justice to its truths.

To take the story literally falls into the difficulty of applying to the hereafter categories which only have relevance to our present. It involves conceiving the life after death in terms of our bodily experience, implying thereby that death makes no fundamental difference in our life. It assumes that Christ will come physically in the clouds, descend on the actual city of Jerusalem, and set up an earthly kingdom, restoring to believers the very bodies they once possessed. Such a viewpoint entails the assumption that the hereafter is almost identical with our present; and, indeed, by taking the magnificent poetry of *Revelation* literally we are driven to obvious absurdities. Who would want to live in a city garnished with precious stones, or delight in vultures that devoured the flesh of apostate warriors? The many contradictions in the picture of the future outlined in John's *Apocalypse* preclude our accepting such symbols literally. And if we cannot so understand the minor details, there is no reason for so viewing the major events. Those who look for a sudden appearance of Christ in the clouds are confusing historical facts with religious symbols. It is true that this mode of interpretation has had a long history in the church, and there still are many who champion it, believing that by so doing they show a special loyalty to

the faith. What the fourth-century historian Eusebius said of Papias is surely applicable to them: "These ideas I suppose he got through misconstruing apostolic accounts, not realizing that they recorded things in figures and mystically."

There is a twofold peril in accepting the Christian story literally. On the one hand, there is a tendency to be so interested in the details that the inner meaning is missed; on the other, there arises a conflict between faith and our knowledge of our world. For some, it is true, this conflict is not very serious, especially when one is not the reflective type of person. But those who try to gain some coherent view of our world and our destiny cannot avoid a serious impasse when the Christian story is taken literally. Faith and knowledge come into conflict, and serious intellectual and even emotional troubles result.

At the opposite pole is a corresponding danger—to interpret the Christian symbols in a rationalistic way. Here they are viewed as a poetic mode of expressing hopes about the course of our human history. The Kingdom, for instance, is taken as almost equivalent to democracy. The Christian story is thus confused with an expectation of continuous progress, and it is anticipated that the time will come when we shall have advanced so far that men will dwell in peace, plenty, and brotherhood. Through the spread of education, adjustment and good will we shall have exorcised the unhappy evils of our mortal existence. Those symbols, such as the resurrection of the body, which do not fit such an interpretation, are discarded. Our personal destiny is viewed either as one in which we live on in our children and through our influence, or as some immortality which is quite irrelevant to the climax of human history. Such a hope for our world is not, perhaps, one of which we are very convinced today. Disillusionment, rather than optimism, is the note of our age. Yet Communism is motivated in no small measure by a similar expectation, which represents a secularizing of some parts of the Christian story; and there still exist those whose thought, while more explicitly Christian, is dominated by the hopeful expectations of the 1920's.

The various modifications of this view fail to appreciate the depth of the Christian faith. They do not take seriously the Christian understanding of sin; they have no place for the resurrection of the body; and they do not recognize that redemption means more than the advance of human brotherhood and the democratic way of life. They fail to see how a much more radical transformation of history is needed, if men are to live together with good will. Finally, they do not relate the course of our human history

integrally with a personal hereafter. Immortality, when it is affirmed, is not connected with the anticipated millennium.

### III. THE CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS

What then do the Christian symbols mean? What are we trying to affirm when we tell the Christian story of the hereafter?

Our first affirmation is that *this present life will find fulfillment*. None of our deepest yearnings are realized in this mortal present. Whether death comes suddenly and abruptly, or whether it comes slowly, at the end of a long pilgrimage, we feel this life is incomplete. It is not only that the values of justice and righteousness are so often outraged in our human history, that, convinced as we are of their enduring nature, we are forced to believe that injustice will be rectified and unrighteousness finally overcome in love. We are also aware that we have but caught a far vision of what love means. In moments of enlightenment we have grasped—or rather, been grasped by—the inner meaning of our life; but we are far from realizing it, from embodying it in our relations with each other and with God. We neither know the depths of ourselves, nor rightly how to love God. We are overwhelmed with a feeling of our incompleteness, as well as our inadequacy. And if in some way we have glimpsed, through the Holy Spirit, what life *can* be, and have learned in a measure how to love, we know, too, that our destiny is to reach completeness. For there would be no meaning in a love which but began and then abruptly ceased; and for the Christian, love is the ground of the universe.

The symbol of this fulfillment is eternal life. This does not mean a life that merely goes on and on, but a life whose quality overcomes the incompleteness and broken nature of the temporal world. It means a life in which sin no longer exists, and our original relation to God is restored.

In trying to think this through, we cannot be contented with the idea that on death souls immediately enter into bliss or are consigned to hell. The difficulty with this view of an immediate and final judgment is that it detracts from the significance of other symbols, such as Christ's second coming and the resurrection of the body with which we shall later deal. Moreover, it is very individualistic. It sees the value of souls in their separateness rather than their corporateness. It deals with them as atoms—each to be judged according to its faith or merits. Furthermore, it gives no place to the notion of development. We are ready neither for heaven nor hell at death. It is hard to think of anyone so evil that he has totally extinguished the possibility of good, or any so good that he can at once be

fully restored to perfect harmony with God. It is because we shall have so much more to learn about how to love, that we need some such symbol as purgatory. The typical Roman Catholic doctrine may not commend itself, for it views purgatory as a place of torment, in which the temporal punishment due to sin is completed. This outlook is legalistic; and for those who do not believe God deals with man in this way, but rather educates him through love, purgatory must be reinterpreted. At death we enter on a further journey in our destiny to learn how to love God; and while we shall be surrounded by his lovingkindness, we should not imagine that we shall necessarily be free from pain. For that is the only way by which love is born and matured. Without suffering no joy is possible; and without our being able to suffer for each other and for ourselves, as Christ most fully did for us, none can reach the fullness of redemption.

Our second affirmation is that *fulfillment is both personal and social*. For this we use the symbol of the Kingdom. Our reality is not individual, but corporate. We are all tied up in the same bundle of life together and affect each other in dark and complex ways. The whole human race is a basic unity, and our self-consciousness is only one aspect of our real being. We often wrongly imagine that our reality is identical with our self-consciousness. Yet the more we learn about ourselves, the more astonished are we to discover who and what we actually are. Hidden in the depths of our unconsciousness are motives of which we are not aware, memories long forgotten, ways of acting and thinking which startle us when, in some moment of enlightenment, we suddenly become conscious of them. We are by no means the persons we think we are. We see through a glass darkly. Only God knows our true being. And this being cannot be separated from the whole human race. Every member implies every other member, though the connection may sometimes seem mysterious and obscure. Yet when we reflect upon the extent to which we owe our being to others and are unconsciously as well as consciously affected by their thoughts and emotions, we gain some vision of what this unity of the race means. Moreover, as our knowledge of physical phenomena grows, we begin to understand how our depths are involved in those of others—how we live in no self-enclosed and private world of our own dwelling, but in the deep sea of universal being. There are no such things as secret thoughts and acts; there are no "private" lives in any ultimate sense. Within our depths there is access to past and future, to everyone and everything.

This does not destroy personality, but sets it in its right perspective. Personality is the coming to self-consciousness of being; and the fulfillment



of which we speak involves the completion of personality in the corporate life of all. The Kingdom thus cannot mean just the aggregation of redeemed persons, but the restoration of the whole creation of God.

This leads to our third affirmation: *the resurrection of the body*. Our fulfillment must imply our totality—soul and body. We are not immortal souls unhappily enclosed in bodies—the *soma-sema* (body-tomb) conception of Orphism. We do not hold that bodily creation is evil, and only spirit good. Both belong to God's good creation, though torn and disrupted by sin. Indeed, we cannot make any sharp distinction between soul and body, for we are fundamentally unities. Eternal life must somehow imply the body. We are not in essence ghosts. Hence it is important to affirm the resurrection of the body, not in the literal sense that our dead bodies are revived from the tomb at a special moment in time, but in the sense that what we do now in the body has eternal significance, and the life we shall enjoy hereafter fulfills our bodily existence. Further speculation on the question is impossible. Paul speaks of "spiritual bodies," and intimates that we sow them now in this mortal life. Of their nature we cannot say more: but we hold there is an essential continuity between this life and the next, and a continuity in which the body finds its ultimate meaning.

Our fourth affirmation is that *there is a hell*—a state or condition of suffering for the unregenerate. Hell is not a place, least of all a place in the center of the earth, for we cannot apply the categories of our present existence to the life after death. By hell, then, we intend the pain and self-defeating nature of the egocentric life. It means exclusion from love, from creativity, and from God. Dante's conception of the devil as immersed in a block of ice perhaps comes nearest to expressing the rigid loneliness of those who are unmoved by love or sympathy. It is possible, perhaps, that there are some lost souls who forever remain untouched by God's abundant pity, and have become so inured to heartlessness that they have lost the opportunity of learning to love. It would, however, be unwise to assert this too vigorously; though the possibility must be kept in mind. It is important to realize that every moment constitutes for us a crisis in which we have to decide for or against God, and there may come a time when freedom to decide is lost.

Yet it is difficult for us to imagine that any have so completely foregone their better nature that all hope of their redemption is destroyed. The universalism of Origen commends itself for several reasons. For one thing it emphasizes the ultimate power of love. For another it takes seriously the unity of creation, affirming that none can reach fulfillment if one is

lost. The more we learn about the Hitlers of our world, the more we come to understand how their egocentric nature is the direct result of their being insufficiently loved. The sin is not theirs alone, but belongs to us all, for we are part of them as they of us. And even should we say God judges each soul according to its merits or its faith, making allowances for the circumstances in which each is set and for that measure of love, or lack of it, which each has encountered—this still were an atomistic way of viewing creation. We need a deeper understanding of our essential unity as God's creatures; and in the light of this it is difficult to see how the fulfillment must not imply all mankind.

Our fifth affirmation is *the millennium*. The symbol is taken from *Revelation*, where there is depicted a thousand years' reign of Christ on earth with the redeemed. In overcoming the literal and naïve point of view of the earlier period, Augustine understood this as the present reign of Christ in the Church. Within the Christian fellowship sin in principle is broken and love does in some measure find realization. In this sense the Church foreshadows the ideal of our human history, the coming of a better world in which disease, poverty, war, and injustice will be banished. In our modern disillusionment we seem far removed from this hope, and the eager prophecies of the period of the social gospel fall strangely on our ears. What, then, can the millennium mean to us? It signifies the ultimate meaning and value of our striving to put the Christian faith into practice and to relate it to every concern of our common life. It is idle to speculate on the future of the human race on this planet. It is possible that the temperature of the earth will grow increasingly cooler, and after some aeons life as we know it will vanish in a final ice age. But this is by no means certain; and it is a hypothesis that has little to do with Christianity. What is important is that we should hold firmly to the eternal significance of our struggle for social justice and human brotherhood, and understand that these are only possible when grounded in the life in Christ.

A secular anticipation of progress and world betterment is a hope that is disillusioning. Only in the Christian understanding of man's depths, his need for redemption, and the creative vitality of the life in Christ, is there genuine hope. The tragic thing is that the church has so often failed to proclaim righteousness and to live it, with the consequence that secular groups have struggled for it with an insufficient understanding of man's nature and destiny. The millennium, therefore, must mean to us the religious ideal for our human society, the extension of the Christian life to every area of our personal and social existence. It is an ideal we shall not

realize in our lifetime, and perhaps the human race will barely approach it on earth. Hence it is in the eternal meaning of the struggle against sin and evil that the true significance of the millennium is to be found; for the fulfillment lies beyond this earthly life.

Closely connected with the millennium is the symbol of Christ's return in glory. Since the eager expectations of some cataclysmic event that would conclude human history were never fulfilled, and Christ did not return in glory within the lifetime of the first believers, a reinterpretation of the symbol was necessary. In John's Gospel it is taken to refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Divine Power through which the life in Christ is made possible. This is certainly one way in which the Advent must be understood. The Spirit-filled community is the Body of Christ, who is ever present in the Church. But the return of Christ is always a future event as well as a present possession. The millennium is not yet here, and our warfare against sin and evil is far from complete. The return of Christ is the symbol of that fulfillment that lies beyond our historical existence.

Our concluding affirmation is *the Communion of Saints*. By this we assert our participation in the eternal life of those who have gone before and are yet to come. Because God is the God of the living, and because the realm of our earthly life is not isolated from the whole of God's creation, we share in the lives of the redeemed. The saints are not gone to some place separate from us: they surround us here; and from time to time their presence breaks through the veil of this earthly history, and we are made aware of a relationship that eternally entails. So in our Eucharistic worship, we take our part in the action not only of a local congregation, but of the transcendent Church. The hosts of angels and of saints are present. We participate in eternity. That is the deepest meaning of worship. The veil of the temporal is rent asunder and we catch a glimpse of that life in which we even now share, and which, after death, we shall more fully enjoy.

We have attempted, all too inadequately, to interpret the symbols of our faith as they bear on the afterlife. The theme is perplexing because we try to describe the inexpressible. We are beset with the difficulty that we must speak of things beyond our mortal history in terms which belong to it. Hence we can but hint at the meaning of a story whose symbols are more powerful and more vital than all our explanation. It is the story which really matters; and the more we appreciate that we should neither take it literally nor explain it away, the more we shall be content with the story itself. For its pictures speak to our depths, while all our explaining only relates to our minds.

# What Must the Negro Do to Be Saved?

ALEXANDER P. SHAW

*A leading Negro churchman presents his convictions on the Negro's responsibility toward solving the race problem; neither race can solve it alone.*

## I

IN THE FIRST PLACE, I must state frankly that I do not belong to that school of thinkers among us that believes that the major part of the hindrances to our success and progress is on the outside of us. Environment, no matter how strong and powerful, has never been and never will be stronger than the forces within individuals and races. Whether or not we are willing to acknowledge it, we Negroes are the masters of our own fate and destiny, and we do more to hinder our own progress than all the outside opposition to us combined. If there were no external hindrances or opposition at all, we would still be forced to develop those innate qualities and powers which after all are the determining factors in our salvation.

This power to achieve must be exercised not only by a few select people of the race. There must be a general and even a mass movement upward in character, stamina, dependability, thrift, efficiency, and excellence. No matter if we do produce a few stars who compare favorably with the stars of other races, our salvation lies in the focusing of all the elements of strength among us upon the task of lifting the masses of our people, so that in our own right and on our own feet we may stand as assets rather than liabilities in the social order of which we have become a significant part and factor.

Many of us who ought to be able to see it do not realize the fact that right now as a race we are in the midst of the most serious economic crisis we have ever faced in the history of our sojourn here in America, not even slavery itself excepted. Many of the occupations in which we used to make a good living are going from us. Take for instance barber shops. Many of us can remember when we controlled the barber trade even among the white people of the South. That has gone now. Only here and there can be occasionally found a relic of this means of employment among us. A few years ago we had a monopoly on practically all menial and unskilled labor where we lived in large numbers. That

is fast disappearing. Nothing but efficiency, thrift, dependableness, and integrity will save the day for us in that field. The past ten years of depression have forced our competitors in all lines of endeavor to look out for themselves in matters of employment, so that by discrimination and other powerful means they are driving us to the ragged edge economically. Whether we recognize it or not, the dole system during the recent depression has invited the American Negro into a similar situation to that occupied already by the American Indian; although much time may first elapse, we are facing a fate like theirs. So many of us who ought to know better are singing and dancing, shouting and strutting, self-complacent and satisfied over little tinsel distinctions and honors which like mists of the morning soon flee away, while the sands of our very economic existence are being washed away from under our feet.

The opening of a few places of employment to a few Negroes as pie in payment for their selling out the rest of us to designing politicians will not help at all in the solution of our problem. Our continuous whining or complaining, and even the mere voicing of our protests against discrimination, will avail us practically nothing. Permitting ourselves to be deceived by the apparent love of justice and equality on the part of self-seeking minorities, such as Communists, will only lead us into a blind alley. In our desperation we need not run to God crying, "O Lord, how long!" He will not hear us, unless we learn the secret of co-operation and self-dependence among ourselves.

As a race we are segregated in all parts of this country. Instead of bemoaning our lot, we should utilize and capitalize this situation and make it contribute to our economic welfare and efficiency. The amount of business which we do in our segregated communities is alarmingly low, and indicative of a lack of economic alertness and efficiency of which we should all be ashamed. In cities like New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, New Orleans and scores of others, there are large segregated areas in which our own racial group does only a very small part of the ordinary business of the community. Is it not strange that (outside of types of business in which members of other races do not desire to compete with us, such as undertaking and the like) we are not able to compete with other races in our own segregated districts! Some of us think we have won a great victory when we force a few of our people into the employment of business establishments, owned and controlled by others but supported by us. Where are our eyes to see and our intelligence to detect the wretchedness of our economic condition, when we can court and



marry each other, belong to the same segregated but exclusive fraternities, sing and preach to each other, acquire our academic degrees together, but are not able to see the intellectual folly and stupidity of a people who cannot sell each other shoes, hats, dresses, automobiles, houses, lands, and other necessities! Alert people do more than talk, orate, or discuss the achievements of others. They do something themselves. There are far too many so-called wise people among us who are practical failures.

## II

In order to be saved, the Negro must arise in the strength of his own freedom and intelligence and break the bands of the intellectual and psychological bondage in which he is unconsciously held. There is probably no stronger foe to our progress and salvation than our mixed and often silly psychology.

It is true that much of our thinking is the outflow of slavery and what we were taught then. For that very reason we cannot make progress without bursting our bonds. We were taught during slavery to discount ourselves and our kind, and to think of excellence as existing only in the white race. We are not ready to save ourselves until in our own minds we realize that excellence may reside in the black race also.

Here is a story to illustrate our befuddled thinking. A very dark woman of our race went into a department store and asked for "flesh colored" hose. The clerk, a white man, did not know what to do. He reasoned as best he could, and offered his customer a pair of black hose. She walked away in disgust. Black as she was, she was psychologically white. Our psychological bondage is due largely to the fact that over three hundred years as a black people we have lived and grown in the midst of a white culture and civilization. The language we speak is not our own. It is white. Is not God white? Are not the angels white? Is not all the excellence even in commercial art white? Do we not see all the beautiful pictures and paintings in white, while we see ourselves only as Sambo eating watermelon or Aunt Jemima advertising her pancakes, or as Gold Dust Twins?

A few years ago a Negro artist thought he had found a way to make millions for himself and his company. He organized a company and reproduced all the illustrations of incidents in the Bible in black colors representing our race. Triumphantly he placed them on the market among us, assured of success on account of our intensely emotional and re-

ligious nature. His scheme fell flat. We refused to buy paintings of black saints and angels. We were too long accustomed to thinking of only demons and devils as black. When colored dolls were first put on the market, our children refused to accept them as the equals of white dolls, and only purchased and played with them after years of training to counteract the habitual depreciation of themselves.

This psychological confusion among us is far deeper and more general than most of us think. It is not confined to the unlettered and unlearned, but runs the whole gamut of the race from bottom to top. It often manifests itself in its silliest and most pernicious form among our so-called intelligentsia. It often happens that the people loudest in their protests against color discrimination by white people are the most insistent upon discrimination within our race among those of lighter or darker shades. Most of the weakness of the race in co-operation, in unity, in self-appraisal, and in achievement in all lines of endeavor can be traced to this confused attitude. To save me, I cannot understand why Negroes of lighter colors, who are such haters of white people and of color discrimination, can be proud of the blood of slaveholders, exploiters, discriminators, and even potential lynchers coursing through their veins!

To save ourselves, or rather to be worthy of salvation, we must fall in love with our own kind. We must see beauty and excellence in black, brown, yellow and white. We may talk all we please about race solidarity and self-respect, but sensible people are not going to believe in us nor trust us until they are assured that we properly evaluate ourselves and find attractiveness among our own.

To be saved we must repent of and turn from many traits and characteristics which have hindered our salvation in the past. Among these are our inordinate love of pleasure and a good time, and seeking these before we have done that more important task of undergirding ourselves with the character and economic competence so fundamental to enjoyment of life. Too many of us seek to imitate millionaires in our appearance and entertainment on an income of a few dollars a week. It will not work. It cannot be done. The exaltation of a few of us to certain meaningless little distinctions as the "first and only Negro who ever attained such an honor or position" is the most colossal of nonsense. What of it? One distinguished Negro among a million childish, inefficient, ease-loving, responsibility-dodging, slum-dwelling, disease-ridden, dead-while-they-live Negroes can never work out our salvation.

## III

We are no problem whatever to ourselves in the same sense that we are to white people. We get along fairly well together and are worried among ourselves only about the economic, social, and cultural problems common to all. We are not ignorant of the fact that we are a problem to white people, but the solution of that part of the problem is theirs and theirs only.

We were getting along well in Africa, having a satisfactory situation economically and otherwise, eating the fruit of our native palm trees—wearing just a little less clothing than civilized Americans—without any anxiety for our welfare or future. White people wooed us from our native habitat by the luring power of red bandanas, loaded us on their ships, brought us here and set us to work for them. They loved us well enough to provide a place on the old plantation for us. When they discovered that slavery was a curse to both the slave and the slaveholder, in a bloody conflict of brother against brother of their own race, they set us free and gave to us full citizenship rights and privileges in the very country where we were formerly held as slaves.

The present discriminations against us are not primarily on account of character. Everything seems to indicate that free and intimate social relationships among the races are not wanted no matter what our character or achievement. If white people do not want these social relationships, our own self-respect should force us to care nothing about them and even refuse to seek them. But their suggestion that we solve the race problem by permitting ourselves to be forced into a place of semislavery or serfdom is asking too much of us. We thought they abolished slavery in good faith and that their extending citizenship to us was not a mere joke. We would be the worst of ingrates if we did not appreciate and accept their blood-bought gifts of freedom and citizenship at full value.

The white race is the author of its own race problems on account of its attitude toward other races. A cosmopolitan race like the white race must assume a cosmopolitan attitude toward other races, or there will never be a solution of the problem. It must come through the white man's sense and exercise of justice and fair play and through his willingness to treat other races as men, and not as creatures inferior and below the plane of humanity, or the problem will never be solved at all.

A few years ago on a visit to Los Angeles, California, I heard a Jew addressing a group of Negro ministers. Among other things he said:

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"Whenever a minority group lives in the midst of a majority group and is in competition with that majority for its share of the total privileges of all groups concerned, the only way the minority group can come in possession of its share of the benefits and privileges of all is, it must on the average be superior to the average of the majority group. It must win its share by more than an average excellence and efficiency."

He further stated: "We Jews have a high regard for ourselves. We do not desire to be like or to imitate anybody but Jews. We neither seek nor do we think ourselves highly honored by intimate social contacts with other groups. We seek most of all to make ourselves efficient and superior to our competitors in every line of endeavor. You yourselves know that we are not spoken of so favorably, often no more favorably than you are, but we have more than our share. We have won it in spite of the odds against us by sheer efficiency and excellence in doing that which we set our minds and hands to do."

I do not know how my fellow listeners took it, but from that time until now I have felt that I had the solution to our part of the so-called Negro problem. It lies in the cultivation and development of individual and racial efficiency of such a superior type as to command respect. Ah, I said to myself, I see now the cause of our backwardness and impotency. We are uncertain of ourselves. We have a background of training which makes us disrespect our own kind. Black people though we be, our living in the midst of a white civilization has caused us unconsciously to belittle our own lot and kind, and to idolize another race type. We are as conscious—and often as proud—of the shades of color among ourselves as the white man is of his color. We spend millions on bleaching preparations. Our judges of beauty often pick out the "fairest" among us as the most beautiful and the most excellent and desirable. Oh, who shall deliver us from the body of this internal death! We must be proud of our race and type—so proud that we will seek to be none other than ourselves and will cease to place too much valuation upon little social contacts with other races. It is never a social honor nor is it honorable to seek to have intimate contacts with anybody or any race that does not want us.

#### IV

Immediately following emancipation we thought we could solve our problem by reducing our illiteracy and by classical education. The first generation after slavery literally "ate up" books. Those who re-

ceived the culture of the schools presented themselves to the white race for acceptance into a full-orbed racial unity, but white people only smiled and said, "Wait. You need generations of culture before you can mingle freely with us or enjoy the privileges we enjoy."

Next came our great leader, Booker T. Washington, who sensed that mere classical education would not solve the problem. "Let Negroes become skilled laborers with their hands—ex-slaves as they are, they can best solve their problem by becoming skilled manual workers."

This philosophy of the Negro's salvation worked well for a while especially in those sections of the country where the skilled Negro workman had no considerable competition. In sections where the competition was strong, white skilled laborers organized labor unions, excluded Negroes from membership, and what had promised to be the salvation of the race vanished into thin air. During the war even in so-called "National Defense" the only type of Negro actually wanted was the unskilled low-wage earner.

I do not seek nor am I able to detract one iota from the greatness and glory of Booker T. Washington. Would to God we had more like him, or somebody in this generation able to serve the race as he served it in his: but the fact remains that no single device, no matter how excellent, can save us.

After his time the pendulum swung into a new arc under the leadership of W. E. B. DuBois and those like-minded. "By the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution the Negro is an American citizen entitled to all the rights and privileges of citizenship. When discriminated against, he must rise up in protest against it and in the courts of the land secure decisions which outlaw and condemn such discriminations."

We soon discovered, however, that judicial decisions, even those of the Supreme Court, do not fully solve our practical problems. Writing ideals into our American Constitution and writing them into American life, practices, and relationships are quite different matters. The Niagara Movement had its virtues of course, and has helped the race considerably; but any movement of Negro advancement majoring in rear-guard action of protest against injustices, or even looking forward to a larger place in the social and economic order, without a supreme emphasis on the character and quality of the man protected or advanced, must and did come to frustration.

The whole scheme of forcing our way into a place in the sun by



power and by might is full of deceptive, impractical error. A weak minority such as we are cannot by any conceivable force overcome a strong majority using the same kind of force the minority uses. One-tenth of the population such as we are cannot by force compel the white nine-tenths to do anything it does not want to do. The Constitution itself can be changed by a two-thirds majority. Public sentiment against all Supreme Court decisions, no matter how favorable these may be toward us, can make them practically useless.

In these times we hear a lot of nonsensical advice: "Fight! Fight! Fight!" A fellow is foolish to fight unless he has the proper equipment. We have too many agitators exhorting our people to fight who have given us nothing in thrift, industry, dependableness, sobriety, good judgment and character with which to fight.

My Jewish friend has given us the key to our salvation. We need seek no other. Our primary need is now to apply ourselves to the long and difficult task of developing, even among our apparently hopeless masses, a dependability, a soberness, a oneness of purpose, an excellence in behavior, workmanship, social harmony, economic unity and co-operation; an efficiency as laborers, business, and professional people, and a moral superiority over our competitors. Big as the task appears, it has in it a larger promise of success than any of the lesser schemes we have employed to secure for ourselves and our posterity the privileges that are ours under our democratic institutions and social order.

## V

About forty years ago a Negro, a young man in Orangeburg, South Carolina, went into the grocery business. He catered to the trade and not to his own race in particular. He treated all of his customers fairly and courteously and gave them fresh and first-class groceries for value received. His business grew to such proportions that people of all races patronized him and he became one of the most successful and prosperous merchants of his city without regard to race.

The age of the chain store came on. Two powerful chain-store corporations determined to put him out of business. One established a store on one side of him and the other on the other side. He did not whine or complain. He went on doing business in the same courteous manner. Within a few weeks both chain stores moved away, and the Negro groceryman was left at the same old stand conducting a prosperous business as he approached the age of respectable retirement. He suc-

ceeded on account of the quality of service and character he put into his business. His powerful competitors failed to move him.

When I went to Los Angeles in 1917, I met a young Negro man studying to become an architect. I frankly explained to him the difficulty he was up against. I said: "Our people are not building any homes or institutions. We are glad to buy homes abandoned by white people who move out into finer residential sections of the city." He replied: "I like the profession and I want to become an architect no matter what the difficulties in the way may be." Against what I considered sound advice he went ahead, became a first-class architect of such excellence and efficiency that he occupies a downtown office, has helpers of both white and Negro races working for him, and is classed as one of the most successful architects in America. He serves not only his own race group but all races, having burned racial barriers away by excellence and efficiency in his profession. His name is Architect Paul Williams of Los Angeles.

Immediately after the depression of the thirties started, strong and influential committees of white citizens made personal contacts with and demands upon employers of Negro workers in large numbers all over the country requesting and demanding their dismissal, so that the employment of white unemployed workers could become more and more numerous. A few weak-kneed employers heeded their demands, but where Negroes were rendering exceptionally excellent service, employers withstood the committees at the risk of being successfully boycotted. Efficient Negroes in all lines of service held their own and are on their jobs today in spite of apparently insurmountable odds against them.

The supreme need of the race, therefore, in working out its salvation is not rear-guard protection from its enemies, not a few stars of the first magnitude who compare favorably with their competitors of other races. It is a general movement upward by the masses of us in character, in efficiency, in integrity, in conduct, in self-respect and self-apreciation—in excellence, which alone conquers all and is omnipotent in burning barriers out of the way.

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# Evangelical Christian Nurture\*

H. SHELTON SMITH

*Modern pedagogical methods in religious education have been useful, but a more vital Christian foundation is now required; Christian nurture must be evangelical or it is not Christian.*

**MODERN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** has often been accused of being deficient in its evangelical qualities and results. Though this criticism has usually arisen within ultraconservative circles, it is sometimes expressed by those who are on the inside of our movement. The fact that evangelism has been made the central problem of the present session of the Professors' Advisory Section of the International Council is, indeed, a clear indication that we are not satisfied with our evangelical accomplishments. While none of us, I take it, would regard our movement as a failure, neither would any of us, I should hope, conclude that it is adequate to meet the deep moral crisis through which mankind is now passing.

Our present condition invites brief historical reflection. Our movement emerged, let us remind ourselves, partly as an alternative procedure to mass revivalism. The American denominational bodies that have accorded religious nurture its widest patronage arose largely through the application of a revivalist technique. Though in those earlier times they encouraged the Sunday school, they generally utilized it as a revivalist instrument. A pattern of new-birth religion, with its assumption of humanity as divisible exclusively between the lost and the saved, marked the operations of the Sunday school as well as those of the church. The adult experience of the penitential struggle became normative also for the young. The rhythm of revivalism was periodic; tidal waves of spiritual awakening were usually followed by periods of lassitude. The most celebrated divines were the great revivalists, men who could sway the masses and sweep multitudes into the churches. In its heyday, it was a powerful weapon.

But this type of revivalistic folk religion had its season of strength. Its great era belongs to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, American urban communities, with some notable exceptions, could no longer be shaken by this mode of evangelism. The advent of the twentieth century witnessed a widespread need

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in these areas for a more effective process of securing Christian commitment. There was wanted both a more vital process than popular revivalism provided, and a more profound insight into the bearing of modern thought on Christian faith than the older fundamentalist orthodoxy had produced.

This twofold consciousness prompted the twentieth-century movement of religious education. Its pedagogy was created in the light of modern educational psychology and philosophy, and its conception of the Christian faith was developed under the new perspectives afforded by historical biblical criticism, democratic social ethics, empirical theology, and philosophy of religion. For at least three decades these new insights served to enlist vigorous interest among the more progressive urban churches of Protestantism. That this movement made a significant contribution during the first third of this century is, I think, undeniable. This cannot be as confidently said, however, of the last decade and a half. This latter period has, to be sure, witnessed plenty of hard work, great sincerity of purpose, and much large-hearted sacrifice among both professional leaders and a great band of laymen. Nevertheless, the more perceptive leaders have experienced a growing conviction that religious education today is in need of a more vital Christian foundation. It was this consciousness, to a large extent, that originated the International Council's Restudy Commission, whose important report of 1947, if adequately implemented, will mark a significant turning point in American religious education.

This brings me to our special theme—the evangelical nature of Christian nurture. Let me first make two preliminary remarks. To begin with, it is unrealistic for us to examine our evangelical problem as though it belonged exclusively to the so-called educational agencies of the church. In all that I shall say in the remainder of this article I shall assume that the present evangelical debility of the church school is also characteristic of the church itself. From this point of view, ministers as well as educational specialists share responsibility for our present condition. This goes also for professors in colleges and theological seminaries. All of us, in varying degrees, are personally implicated in our current spiritual crisis; and therefore the altar of repentance must be kept broad enough to include all types of servants in the church of Christ. From the standpoint of the Divine imperative, every one of us is an unprofitable servant.

My other introductory comment concerns the relation of evangelism to Christian nurture. I confess that I have serious difficulty with the often-used phrase, "evangelism *and* Christian education." It suggests that we have to do with two different processes, one being evangelistic and the other

educational. As long as this implication or assumption prevails, the work of the church will remain without a single Christian perspective, and thus the various functions of the church will be identified divisively either with evangelism or with education. No amount of external adjustment of agencies will overcome this unfortunate internal dualism.

Thus, as a preface to my analysis of our present evangelical problem, I should like to reformulate the phrase "evangelism and Christian education." Let us immediately remove the conjunction "and." How then may we bring together the two remaining terms, "Christian education" and "evangelism"? One form of interrelating them has been to say, "evangelism *through* Christian education." Though this phrasing is an improvement over the former statement, in that it denies that the two terms indicate mutually exclusive operations, it nevertheless still implies that Christian nurture is in some sense separable from evangelism; and thus the remnants of duality remain.

May not this be a more adequate restatement: "evangelical Christian education"? This, indeed, has the unfortunate connotation that there may be a form of nurture or education that is "Christian," but yet is not evangelical; and this implication is, of course, erroneous. But at least it has the merit of indicating that the evangelical element is a particular inner quality or content of nurture rather than some alternative method of Christian commitment. It signifies, furthermore, that all so-called Christian nurture definitely falls short unless it is evangelical in process and result.

Bearing in mind these two introductory provisions, let us now seek to analyze the evangelical problem within the organized Christian community. At the outset it is necessary to recognize that the present evangelical weaknesses of the church, and consequently of Christian nurture, stem from a great variety of causes; and therefore we should guard ourselves against oversimplified explanations. It is the general thesis of this article, however, that one basic source of evangelical impotence may be found in a tendency of American religious thought to express the Christian gospel in terms of a secular humanitarian faith. Though this mode of thought is being challenged in important quarters today, it still has vigorous adherents. What is more, a practical secularism has penetrated the empirical church even in quarters where the verbal symbols of evangelical orthodoxy still prevail. Thus one may find so-called biblical evangelism combined with widespread capitulation to the secular mores of American social, economic, and political society. In many respects the latter kind of secularism is more insidious than that purveyed by sophisticated philosophers.



A completely secular view of human life would express itself summarily as follows: (1) human personality is a product of purely nontheistic forces; (2) moral wrong has only an intrahuman frame of reference; (3) "salvation" from social and personal evil depends exclusively upon human resources; and (4) the only scene of human fulfillment is the temporal planetary order. Now obviously it would be erroneous to ascribe this degree of secularism to the church, or even to most other institutions in America.

On the other hand, American culture is by no means free of secularizing germs. Take public education, for example. Though the public school is notably humanitarian in its general outlook and activity, and, though in its service there is an admirable band of Christian men and women, yet the most influential educational philosophers in America are certainly prevailingly secular in their metaphysics. However warm they may be in their democratic humanitarianism, they expressly repudiate the Christian dimension of human values. Presently we shall indicate that this particular point of view, during the last generation, significantly penetrated the educational theory of the church.

Consider also the economic and political doctrines of contemporary America. Prevailing theory in both fields is framed within the general perspective of secularism. Curiously and unexpectedly, the separation of church and state has had the unintended and indirect effect of encouraging a secularized doctrine of the democratic state. Since economic interests are closely intermeshed with political processes, it is plausible that economic theory has also been encouraged in its secularism by the disjunction of church and state. In any event, both economics and politics are now rooted in a secular mode of thought. Given the closely interwoven elements of society today, and considering also the major influence of economic and political policies on culture as a whole, one would naturally expect the church's life and thought to be more or less infected with the spirit of secularism. This, indeed, is indicated by numerous instances in which the Christian fellowship frankly qualifies its ethic under economic or political pressure. Thus, for example, a militant fundamentalist journalist and minister, who prides himself on preaching a "pure" gospel, spends much time, to the manifest joy of die-hard "economic royalists," in trying to prove that the Bible explicitly teaches private *laissez-faire* economic enterprise. But liberal churchmen also play into the hands of secularized economic ethics. Note, for example, a current specious call to "spiritual mobilization."

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ligious liberalism. Within this current of liberalism is, of course, included that particular brand of theologizing that tends to sap Christianity of its redemptive gospel by a mystical mode of deifying the organic processes of nature. But also I would include those types of liberal theology which, in spite of their avowed theism, cut the foundations from under the Christian interpretation of the human predicament.

Our claim that the Christian gospel, as mediated by the church, has been infected with secularism must now be expounded in more explicit terms. As a basis of doing this, let us recall the central purpose of the gospel. It is, according to the evangelist Paul, God's act of reconciliation through Jesus Christ. "God was in Christ," he says, "reconciling the world to himself" (II Cor. 5:19).<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere Paul states the same essential truth in these compact words: "He [God] is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and consecration and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30). Both of these passages, let us note, presuppose that natural or unredeemed man is morally estranged from God and accordingly must be recovered to fellowship with him. They both also declare that Christ is God's direct mediator of his reconciling work.

Before proceeding further let me add, somewhat parenthetically, that this gospel of reconciliation has profound social correlatives. The action of the gospel is never solitary in its operation. It cannot be solitary, because sin always involves more than a single isolated self. Professor Nichols, in his excellent little book, *Primer for Protestants*, rightly says: "Sin always bars mutuality with some person or persons, as well as with God."<sup>2</sup> But if sin bars both divine and human fellowship, Christian reconciliation restores community alike with God and men. This fact Paul perceived, for he expressly stated that those who "put on Christ" thereby become one family of God in which there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free (Gal. 3:27-28).

In the light of this biblical conception of the gospel, let us pursue our present inquiry. My analysis will center upon two basic points: the Christian view of the human problem and the nature of the redemptive action of God in Christ. First, then, the human situation.

The modern mind, says one of our leading theologians, "has evaded" the problem of evil "more sedulously than any other."<sup>3</sup> The term

<sup>1</sup> New Testament quotations are from the Revised Standard Version. Used by permission of the International Council of Religious Education.

<sup>2</sup> James Hastings Nichols, *Primer for Protestants*. Association Press, 1947, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Mediator*. Westminster Press, 1947, pp. 122f.

"evaded" may not precisely describe the situation, but it is certainly demonstrable that modern thought has failed to deal with human sin as a radical conflict between the self and God. This is glaringly true of those tendencies in American educational and religious thought that have been most influential in determining the doctrine of man in liberal Protestant nurture. Educational philosophy, Dewey-dominated for the last forty years, explicitly declares that the self is the product merely of empirical forces. On this premise, the term "sin" is necessarily denied its divine dimension and thus loses its ultimate moral significance. Since the self is regarded as an empirical creation, educational theory logically must conclude that right and wrong are only referable to human relations. Furthermore, according to this theory, an empirically produced human self is, initially, neutral toward both good and bad and may therefore become either, depending upon the moral ideals of the culture in which it matures. Obviously the radical nature of the human predicament is denied on these terms.

Theological liberalism, the other root of modern Protestant nurture, escapes the radical interpretation of the human predicament by a different process of reasoning. Though it usually holds to a theistic metaphysics, it unites the modern idea of Divine immanence with the biblical conception of the *Imago Dei*. By means of this combination of ideas liberalism has held that when the child opens upon history, he is already implicitly a participant in the *Imago Dei* and thus is essentially divine in the depth of his being. Accordingly, the natural child is, in principle, a member of the Kingdom of God from birth and needs only further growth from within it. Clearly, this doctrine also cuts the root of a radical conception of sin.

Liberal Protestant nurture therefore inherited an optimistic view of man from both educational philosophy and liberal theology. To the extent that this view has dominated the religious education of the church, it has obscured the meaning of man's radical tension with the Kingdom of God. Any effort to increase the evangelical potency of the present-day program of religious education must sharply challenge this conception of the human problem.

But in taking a serious view of man, a Christian theory of religious education will need to guard itself against an uncritical acceptance of the traditional notion of natural depravity. The principle of "radical tension," as herein advocated, is only operative if man is not totally depraved. Were it true that the human being in his natural empirical existence is absolutely alienated from God, all awareness of God and of moral obligation to be

reconciled to him would be missing, and consequently the very principle of tension itself would be abolished. Emerson, for example, was on solid psychological and moral ground when he affirmed in his famous essay, "The Over-Soul":

We grant that human life is mean, but how did we find out that it was mean? what is the ground of this uneasiness of ours; of this old discontent? What is the universal sense of want and ignorance, but the fine innuendo by which the soul makes its enormous claim? <sup>4</sup>

In one's dissatisfaction with his present condition, and in one's search for a better solution of his moral problem, there is evidence that the Kingdom of God is not, as Barth claims, "wholly other" in its qualitative distinction from human nature. It is only because God is not totally other that man is forced to deal with his morally ambivalent existence. Man's moral ambivalence consists in the fact that, although he knows himself to be God's creation, and therefore responsible to glorify God as his only Sovereign, he nevertheless tends to make himself rather than God sovereign. He consequently exists in tension between self-honor and Divine honor, between self-sovereignty and Divine sovereignty. In sum, therefore, it is our claim that the principle of tension itself can be defended only on the basis that God and man are not set over against each other in such absolute contradiction as total depravity assumes.

But in rejecting total depravity one must still insist that the unregenerate creature exists in radical contradiction to the Kingdom of God, and therefore stands in need of reconciliation with God as an essential condition of Christian growth. Religious liberalism was rightly critical of traditional views of depravity, but it was not sufficiently critical of its own interpretation of human nature. To be sure, the liberal church fulminated against social, industrial, and racial injustices, and so far, so good; but unfortunately it did not carry the implication of its criticism far enough to disclose the fact that social injustices stem out of the innermost depths of a self radically in revolt against the sovereignty of God.

So much, therefore, for the problem of the human predicament. Let us now consider the closely related question of the place of Christ in God's reconciling activity. Is it not a matter of more than ordinary significance that most liberal religious-educational philosophers have almost completely ignored the Christological question? The same is true, indeed, of many American liberal theologians of the past generation. According to Professor

<sup>4</sup> R. W. Emerson, *Works*, Centenary Edition, II, p. 267.

Walter Horton, "our most productive and influential writers seem to have avoided the subject of the Person and Work of Christ as if it were taboo."<sup>5</sup>

But if there was reluctance to deal with Christology in its classical dimension, there was unusual preoccupation with the historical Jesus as creative teacher, radical prophet, social pioneer, and the like. If American religious thought hesitated to speculate on such questions as the Trinity, the Incarnation, or the two natures of Christ, it became vociferous in its praise of Jesus as a very great man and as a most ideal example of the "good life."

To many liberal religious educators the thing most impressive about Jesus was his invariable reverence or respect for persons. Our most distinguished living philosopher of religious education, Dr. George A. Coe, actually made this so-called "personality principle" the fundamental criterion of Christian education.<sup>6</sup> Christian education, he says, is currently sub-Christian because it does not fully apply the principle of Jesus' valuation of persons.

Coe develops this personality principle in masterly fashion, and thus his book, *What Is Christian Education?*, contains many insights of permanent worth in any comprehensive doctrine of Christian nurture. Nevertheless, I must insist that the Christian community was not born out of so slender a faith. Just what the basis of Jesus' original appeal to his followers was is not easily determined. It is possible that his disciples were first attracted to him primarily because of his unusual manner in dealing with human personality. But if so, they were soon so amazed by his startling words and mighty deeds that they began wondering how a merely human being could be so gifted. Precisely when the consciousness that Jesus was more than just another earthly prophet became articulate, we do not know; but our earliest Gospel, Mark, testifies that before he entered Jerusalem for that fateful week that ended in his crucifixion, he was already identified, at least by Peter, as the Christ (Mark 8:29). This conviction must have assumed new depth of meaning when viewed by Christ's followers from the perspective of his passion, death, and resurrection. At the very heart of the experience at Pentecost was the certainty of Peter and others that God had, through Christ, incorporated them into a redeemed and redemptive fellowship. Said Peter on this occasion: "This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of

<sup>5</sup> Walter M. Horton, *Our Eternal Contemporary*. Harper & Brothers, 1942, p. xiii.

<sup>6</sup> See *What Is Christian Education?* Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1929.



the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear . . . Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:32-33, 38).

Now the point that I want to emphasize here is this: the teaching of Jesus, his deep appreciation of persons, his mighty deeds, and the like, were all viewed by the early Christian fellowship within the context of Christ as Mediator of redemption. Jesus the teacher was evaluated in terms of Christ the Messiah. Quite possibly many of Jesus' earlier sayings were editorially colored by those who later recorded them from the perspective of faith in Christ as the Mediator of a New Covenant in his blood. But if this is the case, present biblical research cannot dissociate Jesus the historic teacher from Jesus the Christ.

From the foregoing analysis it is clear that when Coe concentrated upon Jesus' own principle of reverence for persons as the creative principle for Christian nurture, he departed radically from the historic faith of the Christian community. In doing so, he, to be sure, escaped the thorny problems of classical Christology; but also he thereby obscured the central meaning of the Christian gospel. For, in effect, he made Jesus primarily a moral example of redemption rather than the Mediator of redemption. Or, to state the same truth in a different form, he transformed the gospel of God in Christ into Jesus' teaching about the gospel of God. The logical consequence was the removal of Christ from the redemptive role in Christian nurture.

As a basis of seeking to recover the central meaning of Christ for Christian nurture, let me recall to your mind what was said in the earlier part of this article concerning the human predicament. Unredeemed or natural man, it was emphasized, stands in radical contradiction to the Kingdom of God, and therefore can only experience spiritual fulfillment and growth through decisive reconciliation to God. Now, it is the Christian faith that Jesus Christ is God's direct Word—the Word made flesh—of reconciliation. The "direct" Word, let us note, is not the "words" of Christ; it is rather uniquely God himself in the medium of the Son. The words or sayings are, let us say, God indirectly acting upon unreconciled man; and they are, to be sure, by no means unimportant in disclosing the Divine ideal. Nevertheless, since knowledge of the ideal alone is insufficient, the human problem ultimately demands a directly mediated solution.

Here is the crucial point at which the central but mysterious power of the gospel manifests itself. Consider it, for example, on the adult level

and in its profounder historic form. In the ultimate conflict of the self with the Kingdom of God a psychological condition is finally reached in which the will to self-sovereignty breaks down in paralyzing frustration, and the helpless captive says, "Who shall deliver me from this death?" The biblical answer is familiar to us: "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." This is the very heart of the gospel. Just how to rationalize the exact process by which God mediates victory through Christ, and also how precisely to state the relation of God to the Mediator, we probably shall never truly know. In any event, the issues involved have puzzled theologians, even the greatest ones, ever since the Christian fellowship made its appearance in history. Nevertheless, victory through Christ is an authentic Christian consciousness.

This consciousness, in its full maturity, involves at least three elements that I should like to identify briefly. For one thing, there is the persistent awareness, however vague, that in the vicarious act of the Cross God, in Christ, bore the ultimate weight of human sin and thereby enabled the tension-bound self to trust in his reconciling love. Secondly, there is the grateful admission that one owes his final victory over self-sovereignty to a mercy that is unmerited (Eph. 2:8). Lastly, there is the consciousness that the new creature in Christ belongs to a Community without social or temporal boundaries, and beyond human construction. I know of no more fitting affirmation of this threefold consciousness than is compressed in Paul's message to the church at Ephesus: "But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:4-5).

If this is the essential meaning of the gospel, then it is clear that Christian nurture is necessarily evangelical. It is equally clear that much that currently is called Christian nurture is not truly Christian. This applies to orthodox as well as to liberal forms of educational doctrine. If liberalism leaned too far in the direction of human divinity, orthodoxy in its extreme Protestant form held to an untenable doctrine of total depravity. If liberalism has been one-sided in its emphasis upon Jesus the teacher, orthodoxy has often taught an intolerably mechanical scheme of Christology. Both liberalism and orthodoxy, therefore, have proven to be obstacles at certain points to the full and vital expression of Christian evangelism. Both traditions, accordingly, demand critical re-examination and reconstruction in the interest of a truly evangelical theology of Christian nurture.

# The Neglected Merits of Biblical Preaching

EARL H. FURGESON

*Stereotyped forms of biblical preaching have been justly attacked—  
but preaching which reveals the relevance of the Bible to life has  
advantages over any other type.*

## I

"IT IS TIME for a renaissance of biblical preaching."<sup>1</sup> This is the opinion left, as part of a rich legacy, by the late Carl Patton, one-time professor of Homiletics in the Pacific School of Religion. As a liberal among liberals his was one of the few voices crying in the wilderness, for the "advanced" sections of the pulpit in America remain enamored of the topical type of preaching. Despite the warning of Professor Austin Phelps, able teacher of preachers at the old Andover Seminary, that it is "a distorted ministry which deals in any large proportion with subjects which are not logically presented in the Scriptures,"<sup>2</sup> the "distortion" has continued to spread. In keeping with the general secularization of life, topical preaching has undergone an accelerated development in recent years and shown its fecundity by giving rise to new and popular specifications of the type: the biographical sermon, the social gospel sermon, the dramatic book sermon, the life-situation sermon. The last of these has become sufficiently well established to be accepted by homiletical theorists as a new type.<sup>3</sup>

Topical preaching is not a modern invention, as may be seen from the fact that the preaching of Jesus and Paul was occasionally topical in form; but it is a departure from the main body of practice in the history of Christian preaching. The defenders of the topical form will be quick to point out that the departure was both necessary and salutary, that topical preaching has flourished in periods when biblical preaching had become either academic and sterile or mythological and meaningless. Jesus made topical attacks on a pharisaical devotion to the written Word, while Paul at Athens preached a topical sermon in a situation in which

<sup>1</sup> Patton, Carl S., *The Use of the Bible in Preaching*. Willett, Clark, 1936, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Phelps, Austin, *The Theory of Preaching*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881, p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> For a balanced evaluation of it see Halford Luccock, *In the Minister's Workshop*. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1944, ch. VIII.

a biblical approach would have been meaningless. Moreover, John Chrysostom of Antioch and Constantinople and his distinguished contemporary, Augustine, preached without texts, and did so because the authority of Scripture had been undermined by the use of the allegorical method of interpretation popularized by Origen of Alexandria. It was during this golden age of preaching in the fourth century of the Christian era that the topical sermon flourished. As a protest against a sterile biblicism it was a creative invention.

But of the first great period which preceded, and of the third great period which followed, a different story of preaching is to be told. At the time of its birth and during the years of its infancy, the parents of Christian preaching were the Bible and the Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup> Peter, who delivered the first Christian sermon,<sup>5</sup> went to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, the only Scriptures then available, for his grounding. Stephen and Paul did likewise. It is little short of miraculous that they could have found in the old writings the basis of a new faith, but the fact that they did so is a revelation of the inexhaustible resources of Scripture and its adaptability to the advances of history. It would be incorrect to say that apostolic preaching was vital *because* it was biblical. The true cause of the vitality in this period is more properly traced to an experience than to a Book, but the thing to note is that when they turned to the Book they found there what they had discovered in experience.

After the golden age of preaching in the fourth century, the next flowering of pulpit vitality was postponed until the period of the Renaissance and the Reformation. At this time, after a long slumber of about a thousand years, which was broken by only small signs of life during the scholastic period (A.D. 1100-1300), preaching came forth from the dead bearing the Bible in its hands. The Reformers not only regarded preaching as a divinely appointed means of instruction in Christian doctrine and conduct, but they regarded the Bible as the divinely appointed source for preaching. Luther's discovery of the Bible on the shelves of the monastery opened a new epoch in the history of preaching, an epoch marked by biblical exposition. Luther himself was a massive expositor; Calvin gave "the ablest, soundest, clearest expositions of Scripture that had been seen for a thousand years";<sup>6</sup> Zwingli preached on

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hugh T. Kerr, *Preaching in the Early Church*. Fleming H. Revell Co., ch. I.

<sup>5</sup> Acts 2:14-21.

<sup>6</sup> Broadus, John A. *Lectures on the History of Preaching*. New York: Armstrong, 1902, p. 114.

Matthew chapter by chapter; and John Knox gave such an impulse to biblical preaching in Scotland and among the Presbyterians that it still bears good fruit in the work of men like Professor Andrew W. Blackwood of Princeton, who with his colleagues is "praying and hoping for a widespread revival of biblical learning as a science and of preaching as a fine art."<sup>1</sup>

## II

A modern apology for biblical preaching must be prepared to face significant criticisms leveled by some of the ablest authorities at this homiletical type, and, unless the present writer is mistaken, such an apology must be prepared to accept revisions of the type in some of its contemporary forms.

Perhaps the ablest critic of biblical preaching is Harry Emerson Fosdick, who curiously enough has done more than any other preacher toward reinstating the Bible as a useful volume for a scientific age. In a *Harper's* article (July, 1928) Dr. Fosdick considered the question, "What Is the Matter With Preaching?" and pointed out that many preachers habitually deliver "expository" sermons.

They take a passage from Scripture and, proceeding on the assumption that the people attending church that morning are deeply concerned about what the passage means, they spend their half hour or more on historical exposition of the verse or chapter, ending with some appended practical application to the auditors. Could any procedure be more surely predestined to dullness and futility? Who seriously supposes that, as a matter of fact, one in a hundred of the congregation cares, to start with, what Moses, Isaiah, Paul, or John meant in those special verses, or came to church deeply concerned about it? Nobody else who talks to the public so assumes that the vital interests of the people are located in the meaning of words spoken two thousand years ago. . . . Only the preacher proceeds still upon the idea that folk come to church desperately anxious to discover what happened to the Jebusites. The result is that folk less and less come to church at all.

With a precision born of experience and insight, Dr. Fosdick concludes that "There is nothing that people are so interested in as themselves, their own problems, and the way to solve them." If the purpose of preaching is to win a verdict from the listener and to move him to a new and better form of behavior (as certainly it is), then no academic exposition, however brilliant, is adequate for the purpose. Men are not moved to action unless the springs of action are touched, basic desires motivated, and the real problems which are the hindrances to action uncovered and dissolved.

<sup>1</sup> *The Fine Art of Preaching*. The Macmillan Company, 1943, p. ix.



Tedious exegesis, exhaustive and exhausting, may be foreign to such purpose, but biblical preaching recast in the light of such a purpose need not be. If biblical preaching seems irrelevant to the human situation, the use of a poor form of the general type is probably the explanation of the seeming irrelevancy, for the Bible itself is certainly not irrelevant to the human situation. One recalls that the biblical preaching of the Reformers showed a profound interest in the life of the people as regards character and conduct and that its consequences were political and social as well as personal. This is not to say that the particular pattern of life which the Reformers derived from the Bible is to be regarded as valid for those who live in another time and face different problems, but only that the intuition of the Reformers as to the relevance and utility of the Bible is hardly open to question.

The Reformers found in the Bible the same useful instrument for preaching as the first preachers of the Christian era had found, although they did not use the instrument in precisely the same way nor for exactly the same ends. The Reformers, whose prime concern was in the *ipsissima verba*, could hardly have consented to use Scripture in the same way as the Apostle Paul, who by a use of the conventional rabbinical method of interpretation was frequently successful in finding accommodated meanings suited to his purpose.<sup>8</sup> Nor were the Reformers mainly interested in obscure prophetic portions of the Old Testament as providing a basis for a "realized eschatology" as Peter had been. The noteworthy fact, however, is that in these two vital periods in the history of preaching, the Apostolic and the Reformed, the impetus for relevant and dynamic preaching was supplied by the Bible. The implication is equally notable: If the Bible could be used in a different manner and for purposes not quite identical by men who were widely separated in time, it may still prove itself to be a relevant if not an inspired source for us who live in times very different and far removed from the times of either the Apostles or the Reformers. Dr. Fosdick's warning is to be understood, as he himself would certainly admit, not as a criticism against the use of the Bible in preaching, but against the use of the Bible in an uninspiring and irrelevant manner.

A second objection to biblical preaching is homiletical and rhetorical in character. It has been urged by such men as Alexandre Vinet, Swiss homiletical theorist, and Voltaire, French freethinker and man of letters. Whatever these men may have lacked in common, they

<sup>8</sup> Cf. I Cor. 14:21-22.

possessed in common a cultivated literary taste for well-rounded literary discourse. The rhetorical objection to tying the sermon to a biblical text is that this method tends to dissipate the unity and integrity of the material of the sermon and to cause the sermon's content to become centrifugal, prodigal, and incoherent. For example, let us suppose that the preacher has decided to preach on the text from Galatians 5:22: "The fruits of the spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." The preacher must walk warily if he is not to be betrayed into preaching in the course of "one" sermon a half dozen or more little sermons, one on each of the "fruits." If he has not heard of the rhetorical canon of unity, he will succumb to temptation and his sermon will look like Monday's wash, a number of odd and unrelated items suspended from a single line of text. The kind of unity which such a sermon reveals is the unity of a pile of brush; the content is found together in one place at a given time. This, however, is not real unity. The unity which a sermon needs if it is to be an effective rhetorical production is of a quite different type. It is the unity of a tree in which the same sap flows through and brings life to all the branches. It is understandable in view of the amount of textual preaching of the "centrifugal" type that Voltaire could reasonably have wished that Bourdaloue, his distinguished near-contemporary in the pulpit, had banished the textual custom from preaching.

No sermonic type, whether textual or topical, is exempt from the rhetorical canons of unity and coherence; but the textual and expository forms encounter the problem of unity in an aggravated form simply because the preacher feels himself obligated to be more faithful to the form of his text than to the forms of rhetoric. In reality, the fear that there may be some conflict between the requirements of rhetoric and the teaching of Scripture is artificial and ill-founded. The conflict is not between the Bible and rhetoric but between rhetoric and the preacher who ignores it. With the exercise of a little care the preacher will find it just as befitting to bore through his subject like a bullet as to spray it with buckshot—and a great deal more effective.

Even Galatians 5:22 can be unified by finding a central theme, based on the text, and making it the proposition of the sermon. The particular formulation of the proposition will depend upon the aim of the sermon and more than one proposition is conceivable on the basis of this text. The biblical preacher would be anxious to choose a proposition representing the pivot-thought of the passage in question and the

teaching of the man who wrote it. The preacher might choose for his proposition the following: "The moral fruits which we all covet do not grow without cultivation, but neither can they be cultivated by obedience to rules merely; they are the natural product of the spirit of Christ within." Within such a proposition is latent a three-point sermon, biblical in character, aimed directly at personal problems faced by the listener, and unified rhetorically. A small amount of homiletical skill coupled with patient study and wise selectivity in the use of the Bible would not only meet the objections of the rhetoricians; it would open new avenues of vitality in preaching.

One further objection to biblical preaching may be noted. To make preaching biblical, some feel, is to give to the past a moral and intellectual ascendancy over the present which it does not deserve and which it cannot maintain for anyone who rejects the principle of plenary, verbal inspiration of Holy Writ. Let it be admitted that there is a school of biblical and expository preachers who, we wish, might feel the force of this criticism. Here, for example, is a book of expository sermons on a "neglected" biblical subject, which vaunts itself of being free from the frail and fallible reasonings of man's mind because it is supported by the infallible Word of God. Within a single paragraph are sixteen biblical citations; these are summarized in a sentence the effect of which is to solve a hundred years or more of theological controversy by scriptural fiat. The fact that an interpretation of Scripture different from the one entertained by the author is both possible and prevalent is a matter which the author has chosen to ignore.

The main fault with biblical preaching of this kind is that it exchanges the ancient and valid method of scriptural exegesis by grammatico-historical principles, a method which is analytic, comparative, philosophical, for a diluted and depleted method of selective scriptural citation, which is not exegetical at all. Sermons of this kind are therefore characterized by a plethora of biblical citation and a poverty of critical evaluation.

The biblical preacher, however, need not become embroiled in the vagaries of biblical authoritarianism in order to find authority in the Bible. He will note that the teachings of the Bible are not true because they are in the Bible, but that the teachings he selects for edification are in the Bible because they are true. The authority of the Bible will be seen in its progressive revelation; the inspiration of the Bible will be found in the fact that it continues to inspire.

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## III

On the positive side, there are certain dependable advantages in biblical preaching, not the least of which is one pointed out by Professor John A. Broadus.<sup>9</sup> Textual and biblical preaching recalls the fact that "our undertaking is not to guide the people by our own wisdom, but to impart to them the teachings of God in his Word." Resort to the Bible brings into preaching the needed element of objectivity and authority. Granting that the selection and interpretation of Scripture may reflect the fallible activity of the human mind as well as reveal the infallible Word of God, it is nevertheless true that the selection and the interpretation are not merely subjective but occur within the stream of an accepted tradition and proceed upon the basis of an accepted authority, namely, the Book itself. To build sermons upon biblical themes is to add the legitimate weight which authority and tradition, critically interpreted, can lend.

Without the Bible the preacher is an orphan. Preaching which is unrelated to the great theological insights discovered, perfected, and revealed in the Bible is shallow preaching; it is preaching on the circumference. The true analogue is an old distinction emphasized by Professor Halford Luccock: "Preaching should be a sector of truth and not an arc."<sup>10</sup> An arc of a circle is a portion of the circumference; a sector is a V-shaped wedge which includes the circumference but goes to the center. Moral maxims on the human level are insufficient. The sermon must be "more than a respectable embellishment of a comfortable life."<sup>11</sup> On the basis of the naked isolation of the preacher's own authority the height and the depth required for effective preaching are not available. The preacher may have mastered all the devices for winning friends and influencing people, he may be as jovial a mixer as ever crossed the threshold of a fraternal organization, he may even give his body to be burned out in shaking hands, knocking on doors, and joining orders; but when he stands up to preach, unless he can take his place in the line of succession as a biblical prophet and speak with an authority greater than his own, it will profit him nothing. He will still be man's man; he will not be God's messenger.

Irwin Edman has observed that it is a great tribute to an artist to say of him that he plays Beethoven or Bach without putting any-

<sup>9</sup> *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. Harper & Brothers, 1944 (revised), pp. 16-17.

<sup>10</sup> *In the Minister's Workshop*. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1944, p. 39.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

thing between them and his audience. The only acceptable tribute of which any preacher is worthy is to say of him that the truth of God has found its voice in him and that he has laid nothing in its way. In the awful scrutiny of the preaching situation the preacher will be grateful for the inspired examples of God-appointed men whose goodly records are preserved in the pages of the Bible. He belongs to their company; he is not alone.

In addition to this personal advantage to the preacher, there is a tactical advantage to preaching which comes from close allegiance to the Bible. If preaching is oriented toward the ethical claims of the gospel for individual and social living the preacher will always find himself in a situation in which established ways of thinking and acting must be challenged, old foundations uprooted, and walls of separation battered down. This requirement, laid on him by the nature of his call, is unescapable and irremovable; but in view of the touchy character of many persons who attend the preaching service and ultimately find their places on official boards, the requirement imposes a nice problem in diplomacy. A frontal attack leaves the preacher open to the suspicion or the charge (or both) that he selects certain individuals for special treatment from the pulpit, and thus takes unfair advantage. The victims feel that their neighbors in the pews know who are meant, yet, because of the amenities of a service of worship, they can make neither an excuse nor a defense. The situation is such as might fill any smarting soul with furious frustration.

One preacher has testified that he found a resort to the Bible effective in obviating any such imputation of partiality.<sup>12</sup> And why not? The whole gamut of human frailty and nobility, from the crudest temptations of physical passion to the deepest yearnings of the soul for God, are set forth in the Bible. It is, as Wordsworth said, a veritable storehouse of material. If the preacher lets it be known that it is his intent to expound the Scriptures, and if he proceeds consistently and systematically about his business, he will manage in the course of time to say all that needs to be said. He cannot be criticized for preaching the Word of God; that is his commission.

Examples of this tactical approach from a biblical base are not as numerous as they should be, but one of the finest is a "social gospel"

<sup>12</sup> Meyer, F. B. *Expository Preaching Plans and Methods*. George H. Doran, 1912, pp. 53-55. Cf. also C. R. Brown: *Art of Preaching*, pp. 47-50.



sermon by Frederick W. Robertson, outstanding preacher of the last century in the Church of England. His sermon,<sup>13</sup> "The Message of the Church to Men of Wealth," is an expository sermon based upon I Samuel 25, dealing with the question of Nabal to David's men: "Shall I then take my bread, and my water, . . . and give it to men, whom I know not whence they be?" For an analysis of the ethical aspects of property the sermon is outstanding, but it is even more instructive in providing a good example of a sound homiletical approach to a difficult preaching situation.

A final advantage to be noted is that biblical preaching lends freshness and variety to the preaching program. Every preacher who has had even short acquaintance with the rigors of preparing sermons consecutively week after week will have encountered that state of mind and soul described by the mystics as "dryness." Then it is that the preacher toils in rowing but the wind is contrary. Dean Charles R. Brown with apposite metaphor analyzed the state: "My head felt like Noah's Ark. It was made of gopher wood. It was covered with pitch without and within, rendering it impervious to all new ideas or to any sort of inspiration from on high or from the waiting congregation."<sup>14</sup> Many a preacher, including Dean Brown himself, has found the Bible a more arresting cure for spiritual dehydration than the daily newspaper, the magazine digest, or the latest volume of psychoanalytic essays. "The biblical preacher," says Dean Brown, "need never run dry," and one may add that a preacher who spent fifteen years in one pastorate preaching "courses" of expository sermons to the same congregation for periods which taken together would equal six entire years should know what he is talking about.

Dr. Charles H. Spurgeon, after twenty-five years as pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, testified: "If anybody had been standing in this place and preaching politics and temperance for twenty-five years, I wonder if he could have kept a congregation. All other subjects become exhausted; but give me the Bible and the Holy Ghost, and I can go on preaching forever." There is enough empirical data, and the preacher can verify it in his own experience, to justify the general advice of Professor Phelps: "If a preacher is sensible that his mind is exhausting itself, and that he is falling into a dull round of repe-

<sup>13</sup> *Sermons*. Harper & Brothers, 1871, pp. 185-98.

<sup>14</sup> *The Art of Preaching*. The Macmillan Company, 1945, p. 122.

titions . . . . let him set about the study of the Scriptures more earnestly; let him study his texts . . . . and preach textual sermons for a while. It will make a new man of him."<sup>15</sup> The variety of the Bible itself is sufficient to inspire variety and freshness in the program of preaching.

## IV

If the Bible were to fall into a place of secondary interest in the life of the Christian community it would be a matter of serious moment, and if it were to pass out of consideration the loss would be irreparable. It is the one document which more than any other gives meaning, significance, and purpose to our religious tradition. A policy of silence on the Bible from the pulpit cannot but encourage ignorance of the Bible in the pew, and accelerate the operation of secular forces which reduce the Bible to an ancient and venerable relic. Liberal preachers are the chief sinners in this spectacle of neglect. The plenitude of our worldly wisdom in comparative religions, philosophy, and higher criticism has engendered an aloofness in our attitude toward the ancient writings. As a consequence, the fiercer heralds of God, who make the pages of Holy Writ a playground for fanatics and who satisfy the thirst of the people for affirmations with uncritical dogma, have pre-empted our places as interpreters. That there is no defensible reason for permitting this usurpation only makes our neglect more reprehensible.

The future of Christianity, as a competent observer has noted, is involved in the fate of the Bible: "If no Bible, then no Christianity."<sup>16</sup> The future would be in safer hands if the fundamentalists who use the Bible so assiduously were to become more scientific; but this alone would not be enough. The liberals who are scientific enough would need to become more assiduous in their use of the Bible. Should both happen, one might indeed feel that the future of Christianity is safe.

<sup>15</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>16</sup> Brightman, Edgar S., *The Future of Christianity*. The Abingdon Press, 1937, p. 49.

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# Plutarch

LOWELL M. ATKINSON

*"Our neglect of Plutarch is a symbol of our loss of culture."  
For centuries his "Lives" have communicated the  
secrets of wise and gracious living.*

## I. THE BIOGRAPHER WITHOUT A BIOGRAPHY

IT HAS BEEN SAID of Plutarch that "the greatest of biographers has had no authentic biography himself."<sup>1</sup> In a sense his work is his biography. In telling about others he has unconsciously told much about himself. To look at the *Lives* is to look at the life of the ancient biographer. As Dr. Hough observes, "We behold a gracious, just and benevolent man, entirely civilized, a good person to know and a good guide through the manifold ways of men."<sup>2</sup>

Some biographies are biographies of the body; when Plutarch's biography is written it will be a biography of his mind. We do know some facts about Plutarch which at least outline the course of his career.

It was a decadent Greece into which Plutarch was born in A.D. 45. The glories of Greece all lay in her past. Plutarch lived in a small town, where life must have been lacking in any real intellectual stimulus. Yet he refused to succumb to depressing environment. He always appears as a wholesome and happy man. He was happy at home with his family. He enjoyed the petty offices he held. He entered earnestly into his duties as priest of Apollo at Delphi.

At Athens Plutarch received formal instruction under a philosopher named Ammonius. He learned the philosophical systems of Plato and Aristotle, and made them his own. His travels took him into Egypt and to Rome. He resided at Rome during the years A.D. 69-86 and gave lectures which won him fame and many disciples.

But the greater part of his long life was passed in his home town of Chaeronea. There he wrote his greatest work, the forty-six *Parallel Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*. The dullness of the Boeotian town must have been given a new glory as the great heroes of the past moved about in his mind. The duties of everyday life must have been rescued from drab-

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1925. p. 401.

<sup>2</sup> Lynn Harold Hough, *The Meaning of Human Experience*. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945, p. 273.

ness by the great historic examples of man's achievements in self-conquest. His life was "conventional" in the literal sense of the coming together of great minds in wisdom for living. Intelligence, character, reverence—these qualities are revealed by his life no less than by his *Lives*. He died in A.D. 120.

## II. MEETING PLUTARCH THROUGH SHAKESPEARE

Many people are introduced to Plutarch by William Shakespeare. The three Roman plays, *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus*, are direct dramatizations of Plutarch's *Lives* of Caesar, Brutus, Antony, and Coriolanus. In the sixteenth century, Jacques Amyot translated Plutarch's *Lives* from Greek into French, his translation appearing in 1579. It was rendered into English by Sir Thomas North in 1595. The publisher, Richard Field, was the son of a Stratford citizen, and may have given a copy of North's translation to Shakespeare. In any event, Shakespeare recognized in Plutarch a man who was interested in great men and who had provided in the *Lives* a wealth of materials about significant men in the antiquity of Greece and Rome. It is not too much to say that every significant interpretation in these three plays originated in the mind of Plutarch.

*Julius Caesar* was produced in the first year of the seventeenth century, and was the first of the series of great tragedies written by Shakespeare. Archbishop Trench has detailed Shakespeare's debt to Plutarch.<sup>3</sup> Suffice it to say here that Shakespeare found in the biographies of Plutarch a quality of judgment which he could trust. Caesar, the man of potent and unceasing ambition; and Brutus, the abstract perfectionist who was often lacking in judgment but never in nobility, are characters who walk out of the pages of Plutarch and onto the stage of the Shakespearean theatre.

In 1608 *Antony and Cleopatra* appeared, bringing the life of ancient Rome and Egypt into Renaissance England. The debt to Plutarch is not so detailed in this play, and Antony is ennobled somewhat so that his cruelty and vice are not so obvious; but he is still the Antony of Plutarch, a great man infatuated, and held as by chains in his infatuation.

It is interesting that in the most mature of these three plays, *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare not only achieves a quality of artistic perfection that anticipates *Macbeth* and *Othello* but also follows Plutarch more closely than elsewhere, so that much of the play is actual quotation from the "Life of Coriolanus." Coriolanus, the proud patrician, thought that his foe was the mob of plebeians.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Dowden's introduction to "Julius Caesar" in *The Tragedies of Shakespeare*. Oxford University Press, 1925, pp. 468-471.

His true foe was the mob of passions within his breast and the pride that was their leader. This play presents the tragedy of undisciplined vitality. When Volumnia exclaims to Coriolanus, "You are too absolute," we are hearing the ancient Greek counsel, "Know thyself," proclaimed to the England of the Stuarts.

It was inevitable that Shakespeare should like Plutarch. Both Shakespeare and Plutarch delighted in writing about great men, delineating character, illustrating truth through personality and personality through action; telling good tales of great decisions and enriching all of this with a wealth of epigrams and witticisms and anecdotes. And even when men degrade themselves by choosing evil, they are truly tragic because they had the actual power to make a responsible choice. Shakespeare sometimes portrays men who fail to live well; he does not portray men as monsters who cannot live well. Because Plutarch's *Lives* are able studies of great men, they found an eager reader in the great dramatist of the lives of men.

### III. THE LIFE OF INTELLIGENCE

Plutarch was a disciple of Plato and Aristotle. He believed in the examined life. Man's mind was made for right thinking. Plutarch was never emancipated from the ancient idea that men were made with minds in order to live intelligently. He lived a full life in his own mind. All the light of a glorious past was brought into the inglorious present. The people of the past were his companions. His ancestors became his contemporaries. He wrote biographical essays to describe the fascinating people who gave history its significance. The life of the first century A.D. as described by Tacitus is dreary and wicked. Plutarch belonged to the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal. His mind was a place of great thoughts and a meeting place of great persons. His biographies reveal to us what a well-educated man of that time thought about the statesmen and warriors of the past. The civilized quality of Plutarch's mind is like a cheerful light glowing in a dark age.

The "Lives" are arranged in pairs, one Greek and one Roman life together, generally followed by a brief comparison. Plutarch was a citizen of two lands. His loyalties were both Greek and Roman. Sometimes one thinks of him as possessing the mind of a Greek and the conscience of a Roman. The intellectual adventure was always coupled with the moral adventure. What man ought to know became what man ought to do. So the lives are a gallery of heroes who give us examples of good and evil choices. We are to benefit by knowing their lives as we imitate the good and



repudiate the evil. To use Plutarch's own phrase, he writes of things "worthy of memory."<sup>4</sup>

The wealth of knowledge of the world of antiquity which comes to us through Plutarch is greater than that given by any other author. His "Lives" begin with Theseus and Romulus, founders of Athens and Rome respectively, and include Galba and Otho, emperors in the latter part of the first century A.D. Here is our source for much well-known lore—the Spartan lad who let the stolen fox gnaw his vitals (p. 64), the explanation of the names of the months (p. 89), the story of Horatius at the bridge (to which Macaulay has given such stirring expression in his *Lays of Ancient Rome*), (p. 126), the saving of Rome by the cackling of the sacred geese (p. 171), Hannibal's stratagem of the flaming oxen (p. 217), Alexander cutting the Gordian knot (p. 813).

Then there are the sayings and quotations from poetry—Pindar's lines on the battle of Artemisium:

There the sons of Athens set  
The stone that freedom stands on yet (p. 183);

Themistocles' preference of a poor man to a rich man as a husband for his daughter, saying he desired a man without riches rather than riches without a man (p. 145), and his beautiful simile comparing man's discourse to a carpet whose pattern is best seen when it is adequately spread out (p. 152); Diogenes' reply to the statement that some persons derided him, "But I am not derided" (p. 219), and his impudent retort to Alexander's question if he wished anything—"Yes," said Diogenes, who was taking a sun bath, "I would have you stand from between me and the sun" (p. 810).

But the genius of Plutarch is not to be found in his rich lore of stories and epigrams. His genius is in the portraiture of men. He is the father of biography, and the causeries of Sainte-Beuve and the psychographs of Gamaliel Bradford find their prototype in Plutarch.

In the "Life of Alexander," there is a valuable statement of biographical purpose and procedure. "It being my purpose to write the lives of Alexander the king, and of Caesar, by whom Pompey was destroyed, the multitude of their great action affords so large a field that I were to blame if I should not by way of apology forewarn my readers that I have chosen rather to epitomise the most celebrated parts of their story, than to insist at large on every particular circumstance of it. It must be borne in mind that my design is not to write histories, but lives. And the most glorious

<sup>4</sup>Plutarch, *The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans*. Modern Library Edition, translation by John Dryden, revised with introduction by Arthur Hugh Clough. p. 46.

exploits do not always furnish us with the clearest discoveries of virtue or vice in men; sometimes a matter of less moment, an expression or a jest, informs us better of their characters and inclinations, than the most famous sieges, the greatest armaments, or the bloodiest battles whatsoever. Therefore as portrait painters are more exact in the lines and features of the face, in which the character is seen, than in the other parts of the body, so I must be allowed to give my more particular attention to the marks and indications of the souls of men, and while I endeavour by these to portray their lives, may be free to leave more weighty matters and great battles to be treated of by others."<sup>5</sup> So the biographer who believes in the life of the mind deals with discriminating intelligence with the minds of the men he portrays.

#### IV. THE LIFE OF CHARACTER

Plutarch believed that man was made not only for intelligence but also for character. Like Tacitus and Quintilian, he sought to give practical guidance in the good life to a morally disheartened world. The *Lives* are everywhere illustrative of human freedom and responsibility. As Dill says, "His great gallery of heroes of the past was primarily intended to profit others."<sup>6</sup> In the "Life of Pericles," he states that "it becomes a man's duty to pursue and make after the best and choicest of everything, that he may not only employ his contemplation, but may also be improved by it. . . ."<sup>7</sup> The objects of our contemplation are to be "acts of virtue" which may "produce in the minds of mere readers about them an emulation and eagerness that may lead them on to imitation."<sup>8</sup> The telling of the tale of moral good is significant in that readers may develop moral purpose. "And so we have thought fit to spend our time and pains in writing on the lives of famous persons. . . ."<sup>9</sup>

Plutarch was a humanist and conceived of the moral life in terms of disciplined vitality. In "The Life of Numa Pompilius" he represents the Platonic ethic of vital control (p. 86). In the "Life of Coriolanus," he uses the Aristotelian concepts. "Education," he says, "confers no greater benefit . . . than these humanising and civilising lessons, which teach our natural qualities to submit to the limitations prescribed by reason, and to avoid the wildness of extremes."<sup>10</sup> He opposes all forms of fatalism that undermine man's freedom and consequently the entire ethical life. He condemns Anaxarchus for suggesting to Alexander, who has just murdered

<sup>5</sup> *Lives*, p. 801.

<sup>6</sup> Samuel Dill, *op. cit.*, p. 414.

<sup>7</sup> *Lives*, p. 182.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Lives*, p. 183.

<sup>10</sup> *Lives*, p. 263.

a friend, that all the actions of a king are lawful and just. Plutarch comments that "Anaxarchus indeed allayed the king's grief, but withal corrupted his character," since it was represented to Alexander that all had come to pass "by an unavoidable fatality" rather than by his responsible action.<sup>11</sup> Unethical counseling, then as now, begins by denying man's freedom.

All readers of Plutarch comment upon his graciousness of spirit. He belongs to that company of true gentlemen that we feel it would be good to know. He is a good instance of the civilized mind. His good spirit gave his life a grace and charm that made men love him, and he had disciples from all about the Mediterranean world.<sup>12</sup> He is good without being priggish, and moral without being dull. Character may be hard and rigid, and no one may be more cruel than the man who is right. But Plutarch made virtue lovable and added to character, charm.

#### V. THE LIFE OF REVERENCE

It is not easy to enter into the religious life of Plutarch. The world of many gods and the world of many demons are foreign to our monotheistic thinking.

The Greek and Roman pantheons, the philosophical suggestion of fifty-five Unmoved Movers and later the Neoplatonic hierarchies, the incredible numbers of intermediary demons and angels and spirits, belong to a world that seems to suggest only superstition.

That there is superstition in Plutarch, no one would deny. Yet he is fundamentally a reverent man. He relates preternatural happenings, but neither in satirical scorn nor in credulous acceptance. In the "Life of Camillus" he says of some wonders, "to give too easy credit to such things, or wholly to disbelieve them, is equally dangerous, so incapable is human infirmity of keeping any bounds, or exercising command over itself, running off sometimes to superstition and dotage, at other times to contempt, and neglect of all that is supernatural. But moderation is best, and to avoid all extremes."<sup>13</sup> So Socrates had counseled that we select the best of human opinions until we find some word of God to bear our hope the more surely.

It is interesting to note some of Plutarch's religious opinions. He thinks it fitting "to suppose that the gods feel towards men affection, and love, in the sense of affection, and in the form of care and solicitude for their virtue and their good dispositions."<sup>14</sup> Or again, "it may be reasonable

<sup>11</sup> Cf. p. 839.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Dill, *op. cit.*, p. 413.

<sup>13</sup> *Lives*, pp. 158-9.

<sup>14</sup> *Lives*, p. 77.

to believe, that the gods, with a serious purpose, assist at the councils and serious debates of men to inspire and direct them . . . ."<sup>15</sup> He discusses intelligently the difficult problems of divine grace and human freedom. Homer, he says, introduced the gods, but did not deny man's deliberate thought and free choice. At critical moments, "he does introduce divine agency, not to destroy, but to prompt the human will . . . ." We are not to suppose "that the divine beings actually and literally turn our bodies and direct our hands and our feet this way or that, to do what is right. . . ."<sup>16</sup> Plutarch is not a Barthian in his understanding of grace! Plutarch's theology is essentially that of Plato's *Timaeus*—a God of wisdom and goodness, perhaps limited in power.

We are to think of Plutarch as a man of reverence. He served with dignity and earnestness as priest of Apollo. He arranged sacrifices and processions and frequently entertained visitors from the far reaches of the Roman world—the British Isles, or India. Perhaps his true faith was the philosophy of Plato, the belief in the world of perfect truth and beauty and goodness from which this world derives its meaning. Yet he believed in simple piety and would neglect no pious ceremony. In his biographies he judges men by their reverence or irreverence. He will conserve the traditional forms, lest something good be lost. Between superstition and impiety he will hold a steady course. The reverent man will not permit himself to be betrayed into incredulity and contempt of divine power on the one hand and unintelligent superstition on the other.<sup>17</sup> Man's response to God is a significant part of the tale biography tells. And Christian preachers from Basil to Jeremy Taylor have found in Plutarch a friend.

## VI. BEYOND PLUTARCH

One wonders what Plutarch thought of the Christian religion, if indeed he knew about it. The early pagan misinterpretation of Christianity is an extraordinary story. Tacitus, the Roman historian, for instance, was a moral man. He wrote his annals and histories from a moral perspective. His description of Christianity is, therefore, the more incredible. This "mischievous superstition," he says, temporarily checked by the procurator, Pontius Pilate, "again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular." This Oriental "superstition" was checked again by the ingenious persecution of the Roman

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Lives*, p. 285.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. "Life of Alexander," p. 853.

authority in the person of the emperor, whose name was Nero. Yet the discipline seemed extreme, even to the hardened populace of Rome, and hence, "even for criminals who deserved extreme and exemplary punishment, there arose a feeling of compassion."<sup>18</sup>

One wonders what Plutarch would have thought if he had been among the Greeks who listened to Paul on the hill in Athens. He would not have mocked, and at the least he would have promised to hear the preacher again.

Both Plutarch and Paul traveled in Greece and Rome, for it was an age of much travel. The roads were safe, the seas were cleared of pirates, and guidebooks directed travelers along the good Roman highways and advised them as to the inns along the way. So Plutarch traveled and lectured in Rome that men might be inspired to emulate the lives of the good and great of the past. Paul traveled in Asia, heard the call to the land of Alexander, visited Athens, looked westward toward Rome. Wherever he went he brought news, startling news that cut through the fears and hesitations of a world sick at heart, suffering from loss of nerve, and beset by a host of superstitious fears. It was news that was needed, for the world was prematurely grown old. The news was good news, for it brought assurance of vitality to a world that had exhausted all experiences, confidence to a world of tentativeness and compromise, freedom to a world wearied by its own wickedness and tragic frustration.

We do not know whether Plutarch knew of Paul's imprisonment under Nero, just previous to his own visit to Rome. Nor do we know if he saw a copy of the letter Paul wrote from Rome to Philippi, north of Chaeronea. Perhaps Plutarch would not have found it difficult to follow the preacher who spoke of the goodness of God and His concern for men. The exhortation, "Let your moderation be known to all men," would have been familiar enough. And the final word to the Philippians would have warmed his heart: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." And as the deeper meanings of the great news of the Incarnation became clear, the sage of Chaeronea would have understood with deep content, that the good news preached by Paul made secure all the good things about which he really cared. The pagan world at its best had been earnestly endeavoring to solve man's great problems, sometimes asking how to live, and sometimes asking

<sup>18</sup> Tacitus, *Annals* 15:44. Modern Library Edition, pp. 380-1.

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how to die. Paul had learned in the school of Christ how to live so that it did not matter when he died. It was his joyous dilemma to find such happiness in the present life and such anticipated happiness in the future life that he could tell the Philippians he was happy either to live or die! Plutarch and Paul were both men of intelligence and character and urbanity and reverence. Their table talk would have been good to hear!

## VII. THE RELEVANCE OF PLUTARCH

It is with a touch of sadness that one reflects how little Plutarch is read today. For Plutarch is so practical an author for any person who is serious about living the life of a man! It is actually true that for many centuries he has been "a good guide" for men of civilized mind. It is an unhappy thought that in our century, the great cultural wealth of Plutarch is neglected by a world conspicuously lacking in the very culture that Plutarch can give us.

The blunt truth is that we have "majored" in things and "minored" in persons. We are technically efficient and humanly immature. Plutarch can minister to "this strange disease of modern life." Of course he may seem irrelevant, like any other classic, if we deal with his work as a study in grammar rather than as an interpretation of life. As Montaigne said of the technicians of his day, they find in Plutarch merely "a grammar study," rather than "the analysis of a philosophy in which the most abstruse parts of our nature penetrate."<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, we may come to Plutarch eager to enter into the fascinating story of the human adventure, alive to all the thrill of human decision and destiny, ready to appropriate the classic lore of distinguished men whose choices for good and for evil have woven the rich tapestry of their lives. Philo Buck says of Montaigne's love of Plutarch, "From him he got the moral precepts on the problems of living, and above all the marvelous 'Lives' in which as in a laboratory one may, if one has insight, see the active workings of motive and conduct."<sup>20</sup> In such literature we learn to see and know ourselves and to discover the secrets of wise and gracious living. The great truths of human dignity and moral freedom and personal responsibility come to life as we read the "Lives" that Plutarch has interpreted for us. Not only do we come to know Plutarch and enjoy him as a friend and contemporary, but we come to understand anew the kind of man that it is good to be.

Plutarch's *Lives* were once a "common-for-all" for educated men.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. "Of the Education of Boys" in *The Essays of Montaigne*. Modern Library Edition, translation by Trechmann, 1936, p. 134.

<sup>20</sup> Philo Buck, Jr., *The Golden Thread*. The Macmillan Company, 1931, p. 350.

Our neglect of Plutarch is a symbol of our loss of culture. As tragic as the possibility of the destruction of civilization by the atomic bomb is the tragedy of our loss of interest in the culture we might possess. The reading of Plutarch is one way in which each of us may make a personal contribution to the ongoing of civilization in our time.

We conclude with two tributes to Plutarch. The first is by Theodorus Gaza, who said that if learning must suffer general shipwreck, so that only one author might be preserved, he would like it to be Plutarch, for in saving him, we should secure the best collection of them all.<sup>21</sup> The second is the epigram of Agathias, A.D. 500:

Chaeronean Plutarch, to thy deathless praise,  
Does martial Rome this grateful statue raise,  
Because both Greece and she thy fame have shared  
(Their heroes written, and their lives compared).  
But thou thyself couldst never write thy own;  
Their lives have parallels, but thine has none.

The place of Plutarch himself is secure among "The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans." It is for us to make it secure in the minds of earnest men today!

<sup>21</sup> Introduction to *Lives*, p. 23.

# The Possibility of Methodist and Episcopal Union

PAUL S. SANDERS

*A study of the issues involved in working out a complete union of two great communions—such a union would offer special values to the ecumenical movement.*

DISCUSSIONS OF CHURCH UNITY easily become snarled over the exact meaning of the unity which is contemplated. Some speak of church unity without meaning at all to imply church union. Some think of union in terms of federation rather than organic fusion. Many are content to think of unity in terms of mutual recognition by churches of one another as being each a full member of the one Body of Christ. Others think in terms of external co-operation, but not of actual union.

In this paper we intend full, complete, and effective fusion of two churches: The Methodist Church in the United States and the Protestant Episcopal Church. While mutual recognition, co-operation, federation, and other varieties of the expression of Christian unity have good points, yet it is not these that we here contemplate, but rather that two hitherto independent and self-determining churches, which previously have behaved as two bodies, shall begin to behave as one body.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of The Methodist and Episcopal Churches, however, the process will be in a sense as much one of reunion as of union. For while these two bodies have been completely independent of one another, and have always acted as such, nevertheless there is no ignoring their common historical ancestry and tradition. "The problem is not that of bringing two strangers together; it is rather that of healing a family estrangement."<sup>2</sup> It is a commonplace of history that both had their origin in the Church of England and have always recognized their blood ties.<sup>3</sup>

Negotiations in favor of union began as early as a personal letter from Methodist Bishop Coke to Episcopal Bishop White in 1791. Within recent decades, overtures from the Episcopal Church were laid on the table by the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bishop Angus Dun, *The Meanings of Unity*. Harper & Brothers, 1937, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. Lowell, "Union in Twelve Years," *The Christian Century*, March 5, 1947, p. 298.

<sup>3</sup> The Methodist Episcopal Church, as a successor, at least in part, to the English Church in America, was organized in 1784. The Protestant Episcopal Church, claiming the succession to the Establishment by episcopal ordination, was organized in 1789.

Methodists because the latter were concerned with the more immediate unification of their own three major branches, a union which was successfully consummated in 1939.

### I. QUESTIONS OF FAITH AND ORDER

According to the Edinburgh Report, 1937, there are five areas of discussion pertaining to Faith and Order which involve conditions basic to organic church union. Before two churches could agree to become one, certain decisions would have to be made with respect to the following five broad areas of theological presupposition.<sup>4</sup> (1) There would have to be a measure of agreement with respect to confessions of belief. (2) There would have to be rather general agreement with respect to the rationale and practice of Christian worship. (3) There would have to be some common understanding of the doctrine and practice of sacramental worship. (4) There would have to be common agreement on polity. (5) There would have to be settled the exceedingly thorny question of the authority of the ministry—in short, a doctrine of Orders generally acceptable to both groups.

#### 1. Faith

The Methodist Church and the Episcopal Church share the same Articles of Religion. Wesley abridged the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England to twenty-four, to which was added one on civil authority, making the Twenty-five Articles, which together with the Scriptures are considered the basis of doctrine in the American Methodist Church.

The Articles, while protected in Methodist discipline from change, are not really basic to present-day thought. They are, as Professor Rall says, "theological formulations deriving from an earlier situation" which "do not bring out the distinctive ethos of Methodist faith and message."<sup>5</sup> The actual thought of the Church is to be found in its pulpits, its periodicals and books, and the curricula of its theological seminaries.

While the Articles are theoretically basic to the faith of the Church, no subscription to them is required for admission into the Church. Ministers on being "received into full connection" in an Annual Conference are asked whether they believe the doctrines of the Church to be "in harmony with the Holy Scriptures," and whether they will "preach and maintain them."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> L. Hodgson, ed., *Second World Conference on Faith and Order, Edinburgh, 1937*. The Macmillan Company, 1938, pp. 253-7.

<sup>5</sup> H. F. Rall, "The Methodist Conception of the Church," in *The Nature of the Church*. Willett, Clark & Company, 1945, p. 102.

<sup>6</sup> *Discipline of The Methodist Church, 1944*, par. 343.

In the Episcopal Church, while the Thirty-nine Articles are again theoretically basic to the faith of the Church, little real stress is laid upon them. No applicant for membership is required to confess adherence, and in the United States not even the clergy are required to subscribe to them.

The Methodist response to the Lausanne Report of 1927 indicated that for Methodism the Scriptures would be a sufficient norm for the unity in faith considered essential for church union. At the same time the Church of England answered that the final authority for doctrine is Scripture, but that the ancient creeds are desirable or even necessary for the realization of church unity. This ties in with the well-known points of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, which demands adherence to the Scriptures and the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as a basis of faith. Methodism did not retain the Nicene Creed, but would have no difficulty in accepting it. It has, of course, kept the Apostles' Creed.

The Edinburgh Report indicated sufficient common agreement on the following points to warrant hope for church unity based on agreement in matters of faith: (1) the Old and New Testaments; (2) the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds; (3) the guidance of the Holy Spirit, known as a "divinely sustained consciousness of the presence of the living Christ"; and (4) an acknowledgment that "God has yet more light to break forth from His Holy Word" for a humble and waiting Church."<sup>7</sup>

Both the Episcopal and Methodist Churches could subscribe to these four essentially necessary agreements.

More basic than discussions of faith in general are two specific points, both of which have been treated thoroughly by the Faith and Order movement: the doctrine of Grace, and the doctrine of the Church, involving as they do the ministry and the Sacraments. The question basically is

in what degree the Christian depends ultimately for his assurance that he is in vital touch with Christ upon the possession of the ministry and the sacraments, upon the Word of God in the Church, upon the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, or upon all of these.<sup>8</sup>

The Methodist position on the doctrine of grace is well stated by E. D. Soper in the following paragraph:

. . . . Every human being who has had the experience of salvation is in immediate contact with the God who is revealed through Jesus Christ. As possessors of this Grace they are children of God and brothers of all who share this experience with them. . . . Nothing else is necessary or stands between them as Christian brethren. The possibility of Christian unity is not at bottom a matter of doctrine or order; it is the possession of the common experience of the Grace of God in Christ Jesus our

<sup>7</sup> *Edinburgh, 1937*, pp. 253-4.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.



Lord. This involves doctrinal statement and must express itself in organized form but these are secondary, resting down on the basal experience which has been the common experience of all God's children from apostolic times down to our day.<sup>9</sup>

In the Report of the Commission in the volume, *The Doctrine of Grace*, we find it stated, with respect to the Anglican position, that the theology of grace does not occupy the Church of England very much. Your Anglican acknowledges his dependence on God, his duty to live a Christian life, his consciousness of weakness and failure, and his desire for divine help; and he believes that help comes from God through the Sacraments and prayer. There he is willing to rest the case.

The doctrine of grace is involved with the doctrine of the Church. While both Methodists and Episcopalians would subscribe to one view expressed at Edinburgh, that "all who have been baptized and have not by deed or word repudiated their heritage belong to the Church and are to be regarded as members,"<sup>10</sup> yet there are two divergent emphases involved which need consideration.

These two views of the church are contrasted in the Edinburgh Report, "for the want of any more accurate terms," as "authoritarian" and "personal." The former, to which the Anglican Communion subscribes, is that the church is based on a givenness with respect to Scripture, orders, creeds, and worship, which provide the church with definite objective reality. The latter type, to which The Methodist Church would more likely subscribe, sees the individual experience of divine grace as the ruling principle of the "gathered" church, "in which freedom is both enjoyed as a religious right and enjoined as a religious duty."<sup>11</sup>

The two terms used at Edinburgh are partly synonymous with the terms made famous by Troeltsch, the "church" and the "sect." Other terms which help expand the meaning of this distinction are "corporate" versus "individualistic" views of the church; or "institutional" versus "spiritual" conceptions; or "dogmatic" versus "pragmatic," or even "Catholic" versus "Protestant."

The Anglican Communion adheres to a doctrine of the church which stresses its givenness, its dogmatic, corporate, and institutional character. Lewis has defined the church from the Anglican point of view as a visible society with institutionalized officers, regulations, and powers, . . . a historic institution, functioning with the normal rights and privileges of any institu-

<sup>9</sup> E. D. Soper, "Grace in Methodist Tradition," in *The Doctrine of Grace*. Ed. W. T. Whitley, London, 1932, p. 290.

<sup>10</sup> *Edinburgh*, 1937, p. 232.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 257-8.

tion . . . [which] appeared in history as a result of the life and teachings of Christ, . . . organized and functioning under the leadership of the Apostles and perpetuating their teaching, worship and prayers.<sup>12</sup>

Methodism did not begin its life as a separatist movement, conscious of organizing a "church." It was primarily interested in individual salvation and in evangelization. Against this background any Methodist interpretation of the church must be understood. Its emphasis has always been evangelical and ethical rather than dogmatic and metaphysical. Never stressing its separateness as a "sect" or a "church," it has always assumed that both it and all other societies similarly setting forth the gospel are members of one Holy Catholic Church, and of one another. It has conceived of the church as a "continuing incarnation in so far forth as it realizes and expresses the Spirit that was in Christ. Christ lives and works visibly on earth in the body of his followers."<sup>13</sup>

With such a view Methodism has been inclusive rather than exclusive, catholic rather than sectarian. It affirms the total unity of the church in stressing both the personal and the social aspects of the Christian life, the evangelical and the educational aspects of the church's task, the holiness of God and the responsibility of man, individual experience and corporate fellowship, the Kingdom on earth and the Kingdom in heaven. In so doing it has partially broken down the distinction between "church" and "sect" and has pointed the way toward a resolution of this antithesis.

On the other hand, while the Episcopal Church emphasizes the corporate nature of the church, it certainly would not deny the importance of personal religious experience and the primary importance of the grace of God as it is realized in the individual through and in the context of the church.

Any distinction between Methodist and Episcopal concepts of the church should not, therefore, be pushed too vigorously. With reference to the particular doctrines of grace and the church, as well as the total scheme of belief, there is no adequate reason for postponing union between these churches.

## 2. *Nonsacramental Worship*

Edinburgh, 1937, reported as follows: "In the nonsacramental worship . . . we are agreed that there is little remaining occasion for maintaining the existing divisions between our Churches, and much common ground already exists for further unity."<sup>14</sup>

The chief distinction between Episcopal and Methodist nonsacramental

<sup>12</sup> L. C. Lewis, "The Anglican Conception of the Church," in *The Nature of the Church*, p. 85.

<sup>13</sup> H. F. Rall, *op. cit.*, p. 106

<sup>14</sup> *Edinburgh, 1937*, p. 255.

worship is the broad distinction between liturgical and nonliturgical worship. This distinction is based upon divergent ideas as to how a universal Christian experience ought to be expressed, rooting finally in different philosophies of the relation between spirit and matter, and tied up with divergent evaluations of the corporate and individual aspects of the Christian life, and correspondingly different emphases on order and freedom.

The worship of both these churches stems ultimately from the same source, the English *Common Prayer*. The prayer book which Wesley abridged from the English book for the American Methodists (the *Sunday Service*, 1784) was fully liturgical, and the Christmas conference, in organizing American Methodism, agreed to use "Mr. Wesley's liturgy"; from the beginning American Methodism was thus a liturgical church.

Wesley failed, however, to reckon with pioneer conditions and the extremely free spirit of the early Methodists; and soon the *Sunday Service* was quietly ignored.<sup>15</sup> Methodist nonsacramental worship then proceeded along the same lines as that of other pioneer churches, and in its camp-meeting evangelism departed sharply from the staid beauty of English liturgy.

Recent years have seen a "liturgical revival," and Methodism has been quick to reclaim its liturgical heritage. This is to be seen in the growing tendency to rearrange its churches, with the altar central; and in the publication in 1945 of a *Book of Worship*, including much Wesleyan liturgical material along with a great many other liturgical forms.

Meanwhile the Episcopal liturgical tradition has lightened somewhat, and we find that Church willing to concede the place of freer types of common devotional expression. Dun quotes Bishop W. T. Manning as saying, "We should make full place for all forms of devotion that are in accord with Christian principles," including experience meetings, revivals, Quaker silence, Salvation Army techniques, and others.<sup>16</sup>

As Edinburgh reported, the distinction between liturgical and nonliturgical forms of worship is a diminishing occasion for division. It certainly is not sufficient to prolong a division between the Methodist and Episcopal Churches. A growing appreciation of the characteristic mode of worship of each by the other, at the "grass roots" level, would do much to remove this stumbling block to union.

<sup>15</sup> This process has been traced more fully in this writer's Master's thesis on the Holy Communion of The Methodist Church. That Methodism was originally a liturgical church is acknowledged by nearly all historians of the movement.

<sup>16</sup> Angus Dun, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

3. *Sacraments*

(1) *Authority for the Sacraments.* Both churches would concur with the Edinburgh Report that "Baptism and the Lord's Supper occupied from the beginning a central position in the Church's common life, and take their origin from what was said and done by Jesus during His life on earth."<sup>17</sup>

(2) *Number of the Sacraments.* Methodism, in common with the rest of Protestantism, accepts two sacraments only: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Articles of Religion state this explicitly. Methodism allows that there are other rites of the church which are Scriptural, apostolic, and useful, but which, because they do not derive from Christ's own institution, may not be classified as sacraments.

The Anglican Communion has in practice never strictly limited the number of sacraments, but it gives a "pre-eminent position to Baptism and the Lord's Supper as alone 'generally necessary to salvation.'"<sup>18</sup> The Anglicans allow the use of rites corresponding to all the other five sacraments, so called.

Obviously the number of sacraments depends on the definition of the term. If the other five—confirmation, penance, matrimony, unction, and orders—are not sacraments in a unique sense, they are nevertheless *instituta Dei utilia*. Bishop Dun says that there is "widespread agreement on the place of these two sacraments as essential to the life of the Church," but concedes that there are "very fundamental differences as to their nature and right manner of administration."<sup>19</sup>

O. C. Quick, on the other hand, insists that "the general usage of Anglicanism, however, has not thus strictly confined the use of the word [sacrament]; and at the present time it is impossible to say that there is any definite number of Christian rites to which alone the name Sacrament is recognized as applicable by Anglicans."<sup>20</sup>

(3) *Nature of a Sacrament.* Both churches would agree, in the words of Edinburgh again, that "the Sacraments are given by Christ to the Church as outward and visible signs of His invisible grace. They are not bare symbols, but pledges and seals of grace, and means whereby it is received."<sup>21</sup> Such a general statement would, however, find wide divergences of interpretation within both churches, as well as between the two as churches.

<sup>17</sup> Edinburgh, 1937, p. 239.

<sup>18</sup> Edinburgh, 1937, p. 241.

<sup>19</sup> Angus Dun, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>20</sup> O. C. Quick, "The Doctrine of the Church of England on Sacraments," in *The Ministry and the Sacraments*. Ed. R. Dunkerley, The Macmillan Company, 1937, p. 125.

<sup>21</sup> Edinburgh, 1937, p. 240.

(4) *Validity*. Once again, words of Edinburgh are used as a starting point: "We agree that the sacraments practiced by any Christian Church which believes itself to be observing what Christ appointed for His Church are means of grace to those who partake of them with faith."<sup>22</sup>

The question of validity, according to Edinburgh, implies two senses. First, if "validity" is synonymous with "efficacy," then to say that a celebration of a sacrament is "invalid" is to say that it is ineffective as a means of grace. Second, if "validity" is only synonymous with correct performance of the rite, then the charge of "invalidity" is less serious than in the first case. Edinburgh wisely exhorts:

In so far as Christians find themselves obliged . . . to judge that the sacraments practised by other Christians are invalid, or doubtfully valid, they should . . . see that the precise meaning of their judgment, and the grounds on which they are obliged to make it, are clearly understood.<sup>23</sup>

The question of validity is tied up with that of orders, particularly in the case of the Eucharist. The Episcopal Church does not officially consider Orders a sacrament, yet it insists that valid orders are necessary for a valid celebration of the Eucharist. Methodism does not hold ordination to be a sacrament, but it does consider an ordained minister to be the *proper minister* of the Eucharist. Methodism, however, allows exceptions to the normal; and both British and American Methodists, under certain conditions, allow unordained lay preachers and supply pastors to celebrate the Eucharist, so that congregations will not be left without the Sacrament.

(5) *Baptism*. Edinburgh reported general agreement on the proposition that "all members of the visible Church are admitted by Baptism."<sup>24</sup> It cited three further points upon which agreement would have to be reached: the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, the admission of unbaptized persons to Communion, and the relation of Confirmation to Baptism.

The Episcopal Church practices infant baptism, followed by confirmation at the "age of discretion." It allows lay baptism in cases of urgent necessity. It feels that since Baptism is the rite of admission into the church, it is "an indispensable preliminary to the reception of any other Sacrament." Whatever values are conferred in Baptism, "it is only because Baptism is the rite of admission to membership of Christ's Church that it bestows the further spiritual benefits associated with it."<sup>25</sup> Generally speaking, the Episcopal Church accepts the doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

Methodism also practices infant baptism, and follows it with a rite of

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 243.

<sup>25</sup> O. C. Quick, *op. cit.*, p. 126.



reception into the church at the "age of discretion." It does not use the word "confirmation" but the rite is largely assimilated to both the form and theology of the Episcopal rite, except that any minister can perform it, and not a bishop only. Baptized children are considered in "preparatory membership," and are trained for full participation in the church before being "confirmed."

According to R. N. Flew, some Methodists teach baptismal regeneration, but most consider infant baptism a seal of their adoption into the family of God.<sup>26</sup> In the case of adults, Baptism ought to be a seal and symbol of real "conversion." Baptism may be considered as a "symbol of universal grace," and even as a "channel of grace." Many Methodists would find this latter concept hard to accept, however.

There is no unsurmountable difference either in belief or practice with reference to Baptism in the Methodist and Episcopal Churches.

(6) *Eucharist*. In the words of Edinburgh,

We all believe that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist, though as to how that presence is manifested and realized we may differ. . . . The important thing is that we should celebrate the Eucharist with the unfailing use of bread and wine, and of prayer, and of the words of institution, and with agreement as to its essential and spiritual meaning.<sup>27</sup>

The Methodist and Episcopal Churches share almost the same Articles of Religion on the Eucharist.<sup>28</sup> The theological ethos of the two communions, however, implies a different stress upon the meaning of the Sacrament.

O. C. Quick, writing on the Anglican view, has said that a "valid Sacrament exists wherever *the specially appointed conditions constituting the Sacrament* are fulfilled."<sup>29</sup> He notes further the following corollary considerations:

- (1) A valid Sacrament need not *necessarily* confer grace . . . on the recipient.
- (2) Conversely, a rite . . . which is not a valid Sacrament may nevertheless be a means of Grace. . . .
- (3) A Sacrament may be both valid and a means of Grace . . . and yet be performed in breach of the rules of Church order: . . . [i.e.] *irregular*.

<sup>26</sup> R. N. Flew, "The View of the Methodists," in *The Ministry and the Sacraments*, pp. 234f. Wesley omitted the word "regenerate" from his revision of the Baptismal office, though not from the Exhortation.

<sup>27</sup> *Edinburgh*, 1937, p. 244.

<sup>28</sup> For the Episcopal Church, Articles XXV, XXVI, XXVIII, XXIX, XXX, XXXI. For The Methodist Church, Articles XVI (=XXV), XVIII (=XXVIII), XIX (=XXX), XX (=XXXI). Only insignificant verbal changes differentiate the comparable Articles. The two left out are not of fundamental import.

<sup>29</sup> O. C. Quick, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-9.

He sums up Anglican teaching on the Eucharist thus:

. . . the Eucharistic Bread and Wine are not only signs, but also efficacious signs, in partaking of which, according to Christ's ordinance we do really receive the spiritual food of the Body and Blood of Christ. [However] faith is an indispensable condition of receiving the benefits of the Sacrament.<sup>30</sup>

Canon Quick concludes that with respect to the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist "there is no real ground for any serious divergence of doctrine." Both Methodists and Episcopalians believe in the "one oblation once offered." Both specifically reject transubstantiation. Both believe that the Ever-living Christ comes again in the Eucharist "after a spiritual manner, to help us to follow Him in His self-sacrifice which we commemorate." We do not pretend to offer Christ again, nor to offer Christ instead of ourselves. But "only when Christ enables us by faith to be partakers . . . in His own sacrifice," are we able to offer "ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living Sacrifice" unto God.<sup>31</sup>

Methodism has a tradition of Eucharistic devotion stemming from the Wesleys. Though in early America this was lost sight of, present-day Methodism is coming again to be interested in Eucharistic worship.

Oscar T. Olson sums up present American Methodist thinking on the Eucharist as follows:

As Methodists we do not believe that by any priestly miracle deity becomes incorporated into food. But we do believe in the real, living presence of Christ at his Table. We do not simply recall a meal in the past but celebrate his life, his presence now. We "eat . . . in remembrance that Christ died . . . and feed on Him . . . by faith with thanksgiving." This is the assumption of the prayer of consecration and the communion act.<sup>32</sup>

Methodism is little concerned about the "validity" of its Eucharist except insofar as validity means spiritual effectiveness. Says Dr. Flew: "For Methodists the only 'valid' Eucharist is one where the promised blessing is given and received, where the Risen Lord grants and renews that personal communion with Himself to the believing soul for which the soul was made."<sup>33</sup> Validity may also mean "regular" or "orderly"; that is, according to the discipline of the Church. But Methodism puts no great stress on this factor, and condemns the Eucharist of no other church as invalid if it be spiritual worship. Dr. Olson comments:

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 136-7.

<sup>32</sup> O. T. Olson, "The Holy Communion in The Methodist Church," privately printed, 1942, p. 9.

<sup>33</sup> R. N. Flew, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

Orderliness and scriptural liberty are the norms that govern the Church's usage. Methodism has endeavored to shift the center of gravity from authority to experience by magnifying the sacramental principle of faith rather than the sacramentalism of rites and ceremonies.<sup>34</sup>

British Methodism's great theologian, W. B. Pope, has written with respect to the Eucharist: "Thus this ordinance is the Sacrament, as it signifies and seals the mystical nourishment of Christ; the Eucharist, as commemorating the Sacrifice of Redemption; and the Communion, as the badge of united Christian profession."<sup>35</sup>

While there are divergences of interpretation within each of the two churches, and between the two, yet the general mode of interpretation is one of a Spiritual Presence of Christ realized by faith in the soul of the communicant by participating in the service of commemoration. Within this broad statement, sufficient general agreement ought to be possible to allow a union of these churches, which would still allow, as is done at present in each of them, differing "schools" of thought.

#### 4. Polity

As Bishop Dun has said, mutual recognition by two churches of one another as being "Churches" in the full sense does not rest on likeness in the forms of church government as such.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, should this mutual recognition become a fact, polity would not then stand in the way of organic unity. Corporate union does, of course, imply a fusion of varying forms of church government, but that should prove easier than the settlement of more abstract matters.

Lausanne, 1927, and Edinburgh, 1937, emphasized that differences of polity might best be settled by the principle of "comprehension." This is a recognition that from the beginning there has been congregational, presbyteral, and episcopal government in the church—at times all three in the same church at the same time; and further, that the church today would benefit from comprehending and utilizing the peculiar values of each of these systems of polity in the united church.

The Episcopal Church stresses Episcopal Orders, but from the administrative, legislative, and judicial point of view, the power of a bishop is definitely limited. On the other hand, Methodist bishops exercise a high degree of administrative power apart from any "episcopal" view of orders.

<sup>34</sup> O. T. Olson, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>35</sup> Quoted by R. N. Flew, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>36</sup> Angus Dun, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

Methodist bishops appoint ministers to their pastoral charges and since local ministers appoint many of the local church officials, Methodism has a centralized authority probably exceeding that of any other Protestant church.

Episcopal congregations exercise a good deal of local autonomy, and certainly are "congregational" to a degree that Methodist parishes are not.

Both churches have an intermediary group—in the Episcopal, called "convocation"; in the Methodist, the bishop's cabinet, composed of the district superintendents—which may be said in some sense to correspond to the "presbyteral" element in polity. (The functioning of "convocation" in the Episcopal Church is not mandatory, but is at the discretion of the diocesan bishop.)

From the beginning Methodism has adhered to a system of pastoral appointments, called the itinerancy, in which the bishop and his cabinet have assigned the ministers under their care to pastoral charges, without strict regard for the wishes of either the minister or the local congregation. While this system is held by some to be fundamental to Methodist polity, it cannot be denied that recent years have witnessed serious modifications of it both in practice and in legislative statements. Certainly more serious modifications are yet in the offing, and would be necessary to union.

While amalgamation of the two churches would require a great deal of intensive and patient work, there is no really fundamental reason why union should be held up because of differences in polity.

### 5. Orders

In the minds of most persons concerned with church unity, the crucial issue is the question of the nature of the ministry, and its relation to the nature of the church. Once the hurdle of Orders is cleared, the going at all points should be comparatively easy.

The issue boils down to this: we must reconcile Episcopalians, who hold that the historic Episcopate is essential to the church, and Methodists, who hold that a ministry in which bishops are distinct from presbyters is not essential to the church.<sup>37</sup>

While Methodism has an episcopate, it can hardly be called a "historic episcopate" on the definition of the traditional practice of the church. Methodists are used to the oversight of their bishops, and consider episcopal government efficient. Yet they insist that bishops are not a third order in the ministry; and therefore, at base, Methodism is a "presbyterian," not an "episcopal" church. In this sense, therefore, the issue of orders is just as

<sup>37</sup> Based on an Edinburgh statement, p. 256.

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thorny here as it was in discussions between the Episcopal and the Presbyterian U.S.A. Churches.

It is oversimplifying the case to say that the issue is one of apostolic succession. All churches believe in apostolic succession; the "catch" lies in the definition of the term. The Anglican Churches, as is well known, are not themselves in agreement as to what is meant.

Edinburgh reflects divergent Anglican views: (1) to some, apostolic succession means a succession of bishops in the principal sees of Christendom, handing down the Apostles' doctrine; (2) to others, it means a succession by the laying of hands; and (3) to still others, it means "transmission from generation to generation of the authority of ministerial oversight over both clergy and laity . . . both [as] a symbol and a bond of unity."<sup>38</sup>

Presbyterian churches are apt to define apostolic succession in terms of the continuity of the principle of "presbyteries" having the power to ordain, and therefore to transmit the apostolical succession.

Methodism, on the other hand, being pre-eminently a church of the Spirit, holds that the "power of Ordination to the ministry rests in the hands of the living Church, and that the validity of a ministry is not dependent on any ministerial succession, either episcopal or presbyterial."<sup>39</sup> The succession of the Methodist ministry is based primarily on its fidelity to the apostolic witness; its stress, as always, is upon the organic and vital rather than the institutional and legal.<sup>40</sup>

Methodism would associate itself with this statement of Edinburgh: apostolic succession may be accepted "as meaning essentially . . . the maintenance of the Apostles' witness through the true preaching of the Gospel, the right administration of the Sacraments, and the perpetuation of the Christian life in the Christian community."<sup>41</sup>

Since this is Methodism's view with respect to its orders, it cannot matter too much what Wesley did or intended to do when he ordained Whatcoat and Vasey as elders, and Coke as "superintendent," for the American Methodists, in 1784. A good case can be made out to justify Wesley's action; and in a letter to America, he sounded the keynote of his own position in saying that circumstances had left them "at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church."<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Edinburgh*, 1937, pp. 246-7.

<sup>39</sup> R. N. Flew, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

<sup>40</sup> H. F. Rall, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>41</sup> *Edinburgh*, 1937, p. 248.

<sup>42</sup> This letter may be found in Abel Stevens' *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1864-7, II, 162-8.



If, according to the Anglican view, Methodism is without proper orders, then let it be acknowledged that this lack "has visited no visible handicap upon Methodism. The social and spiritual impact it has made on the Western world speaks for itself. God has been in the Methodist movement, orders or no orders."<sup>43</sup>

The Episcopal Church is divided as to whether episcopacy is of the *esse* or simply the *bene esse* of the Church. All, however, would agree that "the Episcopate is the one means of providing . . . a ministry acknowledged by every part of the Church as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also the commission of Christ and the authority of the whole body."<sup>44</sup>

This would be questioned by many Methodists. The answer lies once again in the principle of "comprehension." As Edinburgh reported:

If the ministry of the united Church should sufficiently include characteristic elements from the episcopal, presbyteral and congregational systems, the present adherents of those systems would have recognized each others' places in the Church of God, all would be able to find a spiritual home in the united Church, and the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession would, upon a common basis of faith, attain to the fulness which belongs to it by referring at once to the Word, to the ministry and the sacraments, and to the life of the Christian community.<sup>45</sup>

The principle of comprehension here implies mutual reordination. Such mutual reordination at the time of the consummation of union would insure the complete recognition of valid orders on the principle of comprehension, and would not rest the case on future "episcopal ordination," as would be implied in simply taking in all presently recognized ministers of both churches, knowing that the next generation of ministers would be "episcopally ordained."<sup>46</sup>

In a public meeting in 1947 Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of the New York Area of The Methodist Church and Presiding Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill of the Episcopal Church agreed that they would each be willing to receive reordination at the hands of the other's Church, for the sake of unity. This proposal would seem to indicate the direction of future progress.

<sup>43</sup> C. S. Lowell, "Union in Twelve Years," *The Christian Century*, March 5, 1947, p. 299.

<sup>44</sup> Angus Dun, *op. cit.*, p. 13, quoting the Church of England Report to Lausanne.

<sup>45</sup> *Edinburgh*, 1937, p. 249.

<sup>46</sup> One of the weaknesses of the South India reunion consummated in September, 1947, is the failure to "clinch" the principle of comprehension at the time of reunion by this process of mutual reordination. Instead, a period of thirty years is allowed, during which any minister of any of the uniting churches will be "received" as a minister of the United Church, with the expectation that eventually there will be a universal episcopally ordained ministry in the Church. Such a view is in some sense an evasion of the real issue.

Methodists would not be belittling the sacredness of their present orders in receiving Episcopal ordination; they know that their ordination has been effective in the church, and see no need to repudiate those orders. But for the sake of a future good, greater than anything Methodism can accomplish alone, they should, in all humility, be ready to receive what Episcopal ordination would bestow—namely, participation in a fuller unity of the Body of Christ

Similarly, Episcopalians, in receiving Methodist ordination, must not belittle that ordination; they must not assume that since they are episcopally ordained, they stand in need of nothing. There is a greater good—the unity of the church. In all sincerity let them receive what Methodism's presbyter-bishops can bestow—namely, participation in a larger fullness of unity.

On no other basis can we even hope for further progress. If the clergy of these two churches would agree to this, nothing would stand in the way of organic unity.

## II. NONTHEOLOGICAL FACTORS INVOLVED IN CHURCH UNION

Quite as serious in the consideration of church union as the theoretical questions of faith and order which have received comment thus far are certain nontheological factors, three of which we shall now touch upon.

### 1. *Variety of Ethical Judgment*

The ethical traditions of the two churches (if one can use the phrase) are quite different. That is to say, the mores, manners, and morals of Methodists and Episcopalians lie in two different streams. This factor is further complicated by another mentioned below—that of social and cultural position.

Methodism has been prone to a strictly Puritan definition of ethical duty. The use of tobacco and alcohol, and until recent years, indulgence in such amusements as dancing and card playing, have been and are frowned upon by Methodists. The use of alcohol is forbidden all Methodists by the *Discipline*, and the use of tobacco is forbidden its ministers. But in other instances the Episcopal Church is more strict; Methodism allows its ministers a much wider range of discretion in deciding what divorced persons may be remarried.

The Episcopal Church, for the most part, relies on its preaching, education, and the guidance of the Spirit to lead its people to make right ethical decisions as the occasion arises. Methodism is more inclined to a legalistic

interpretation of moral duty. It must not be overlooked, however, that the sort of Puritanism with which Methodism has been associated is of the backbone of American folkways.

In the report edited by Dean Sperry we find this statement: ". . . we do not regard *mores-manners-morals* as being finally decisive, either in creating disunity or in promoting unity. We believe these matters to be, in general, corollaries rather than axioms, and we would not assign to them first importance in our deliberations."<sup>47</sup>

### 2. Cultural Factors

Perhaps as serious as any other barrier to this union under discussion is that of the divergence of general cultural level within the two groups. While Protestantism has been generally associated with middle-class capitalism, broadly speaking, Methodism has tended to be associated with the workers, and the Episcopal Church with the owners. No sharp line can be drawn here, naturally, but it must be realized that this divergence of social class exists. It stems basically from the fact that in early America the Episcopal Church was largely made up of landowners, Tories, professional people, and the leisured classes, while Methodism was pre-eminently a movement of the people.

Dean Sperry again has a word of comment. Class lines, he says, are being less sharply drawn everywhere in the world today. Social distinctions do not prohibit men of many classes from working together in universities, professions, the arts, business, and the service of the state. He adds, "We believe that traffic across these traditional boundaries is much freer than once it was, and we venture to prophesy that class consciousness, as one of the cultural causes of disunity in the life of our Churches, will count for much less in the near future."<sup>48</sup>

### 3. Social Action

The nontheological climate of those two churches has differed perhaps nowhere quite so radically as with respect to social action. Methodism has always been associated with reform campaigns, from the earlier days of abolition and temperance societies, down to the present agitation for world peace and economic justice. Methodism was one of the first churches to adopt a

<sup>47</sup> W. L. Sperry, *The Non-theological Factors in the Making and Unmaking of Church Union*. Harper & Brothers, 1937, p. 22.

<sup>48</sup> W. L. Sperry, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

platform of principles of social justice, and it has fought diligently within almost every movement for social reform in America.

The Episcopal Church made very little contribution along this line till recently. To quote an Anglican writer: "There can be little doubt that our American Church [i.e., the Episcopal Church] has contributed very little to the application of Christian principles to the problems of modern society."<sup>40</sup> However, its changing attitudes are now indicated by the recent Penguin book, *Christianity Takes a Stand*, edited by Bishop Scarlett.

#### CONCLUSION

The value of church unity does not need discussion in a paper such as this; it is taken for granted. The particular union which has been contemplated here has peculiar values to offer, however, which should at least be indicated. From such a union would come a fusion of evangelical passion with an appreciation for the church as a stable institution, combining the historical heritage of the church with the vital awareness of contemporary relevancy. It would provide a fusion of freedom with a due appreciation for form, a fusion of social concern and democratic spirit with an appreciation for ecclesiastical and social factors making for stability and order, and a fusion of spontaneity and dignity in worship. Together, these two churches could offer to a needy world more of the spirit of apostolical Christianity than either could offer separately.

There are no issues which now separate these two churches, widely apart as they have in practice diverged, which would not fall before a sincere and prayerful endeavor to fulfill the will of Christ for his Church, "that they may all be one."

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<sup>40</sup> L. C. Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

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# "The Dark Night of the Soul"—A Theological Reprint

St. John of the Cross (1542-1591)

Juan de Yepes y Alvarez was born in Old Castile, became a Carmelite, and priest at Salamanca in 1567. With St. Theresa he introduced a stricter monastic rule and founded the Order of Barefoot Carmelites. He died early, broken by repeated imprisonments; he was canonized in 1726. *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, *The Dark Night of the Soul*, and other works were published posthumously. A great mystic of the *via negativa*, his writing, especially his poetry, shows high literary quality.

The present selection is taken from the translation of his works by David Lewis, London, 1891: *The Dark Night*, Bk. II, ch. xvi. The recent standard translation is that of E. Allison Peers, London: Burns, Oates & Washburne, 1934.

"O SPIRITUAL SOUL, when thou seest thy desire obscured, thy will arid and constrained, and thy faculties incapable of any interior act, be not grieved at this, but look upon it rather as a great good, for God is delivering thee from thyself, taking the matter out of thy hands. . . . God, taking thee by the hand, is guiding thee in the dark as one that is blind, along a road and to an end thou knowest not, and whither thou couldst never travel by the help of thine own eyes and thine own feet, however strong thou mayest be.

"The reason why the soul not only travels securely when it thus travels in the dark, but makes even greater progress, is this: In general the soul makes greater progress when it least thinks so, yea, most frequently when it imagines it is losing. . . . As a traveller into strange countries goes by ways strange and untried, relying on information derived from others, and not upon any knowledge of his own—it is clear that he will never reach a new country but by new ways which he knows not, and by abandoning those he knew—so in the same way the soul makes the greater progress when it travels in the dark, not knowing the way. But inasmuch as God himself is here the guide of the soul in its blindness, the soul may well exult and say, 'In darkness and in safety,' now that it has come to a knowledge of its state.

"There is another reason also why the soul has travelled safely in this obscurity; it has suffered; for the way of suffering is safer, and also more profitable, than that of rejoicing and of action. In suffering, God gives strength, but in action and in joy the soul does but show its own weakness and imperfections. And in suffering, the soul practises and acquires virtue, and becomes pure, wiser, and more cautious."

## A Review of the Quarter's Fiction

JOHN C. SCHROEDER

GENERALLY the preparation of this column is a very pleasant job indeed. Sometimes, as in this instance, it is a good deal of a chore, simply because I have not come across any novel recently that is in any way profound or deeply moving. I suppose I ought to have enjoyed *The Choice*. Its theme is conversion to the Christian faith and there is no doubt whatever about its competence as a piece of apologetic. Clement, a young Jew living in Rome during the reign of Nero, comes to the city with his friend Julian to work as a laborer. There they are given hospitality in the home of Bar-Joseph, an elder in the Synagogue of the Olive Tree. Clement goes there to worship, and one day after the service listens to Peter proclaim his faith in the Risen Lord. At first unsympathetic, Clement cannot resist the man's appeal and eventually finds himself in the home of Jonas, the head of a small Christian cell. His smouldering faith becomes incandescent when Jonas and his friends are tortured in the gladiatorial shows.

Three ways of life are given expression. Julian is the Stoic who refutes Judaism. "At least, Seneca can defend the claim that the god of reason has provided man with power to be both just and happy. Your view, by comparison, contradicts itself. Either your God is just, but lacks the power to defeat evil, or he is powerful enough to guide the fortunes of men, but lacks justice." Bar-Joseph can see in the new faith only the enemy of the ancient tradition of his people, which will put them in even greater jeopardy. For him Jesus is no Messiah, but only a self-appointed prophet, whose arrogant followers would destroy the dignity of Israel and her law. But Clement knows that he has found a new thing. "I find myself completely and joyously absorbed in the prospect of my new faith, and with greater peace of spirit than I have ever known."

Dr. Minear has introduced biblical material into his narrative with great skill. The book has too much talk in it. The characters do not come alive but are perpetually involved in theological debate. There is given to the reader, nevertheless, a picture of the cosmopolitan life of Rome with the many cross-currents of its thought and activity, and of the ferment in its intellectual life as Christianity began to attract adherents.

A few years ago George R. Stewart wrote a novel, *Storm*, a remarkable tale about a little storm named Maria who grew up to wreck the

fortunes and lives of many people. Now, in *Fire*, he deals with man's perverse friend, who can also be his enemy. Lightning strikes one day in the Ponderosa National Forest. Judith Godoy, the lookout at Cerro Gordo, sees the flash, but stares in vain to see whether it has caused any damage. She cannot see that all it did was to heat a few dry needles to the kindling point. It is a chance change in the wind that keeps the dying blaze alive. Only the ants and a squirrel know what is going on. But on the sixth day, Judith summons the ranger and the supervisor. Time and again it looks as though they have the fire under control. But when it begins to rage, lumbermen, soldiers, cat-skinners, parachutists, and an army of volunteers have to retreat before its cruel attack. Mr. Stewart, in this novel, as in *Storm*, offers an extraordinarily competent understanding of all the complex scientific knowledge which men have summoned to their aid as they have tried to learn how to control nature. He has a wonderful gift of description as well as a fine appreciation of the work of the men who protect our resources.

We all have come to know that war is a rotten, brutal and barbarous business: but *The Naked and the Dead* reveals how men, some of them not too decent to start with, are reduced to such elemental forms of life as to make the word "primitive" seem descriptive of civilized people. The book describes the campaign for Anapopei; the dread of men on the convoy, the shuddering moments on the beach, the torture and the fatigue of men in the jungle. They talk nothing but obscenities and cherish nothing but the hope of survival. Their life together curiously creates a community; but it is a community forged in fear and welded by blind duty.

The main protagonists are a gifted strategist, a disillusioned intellectual, and a man who loves to kill. Major-General Cummings is a calculating Fascist who reasons that the machine age must have unity, "and with that you've got to have fear, because the majority of men must be subservient to the machine." When he discovers Lieutenant Hearn's resistance, he humiliates him because Hearn's lack of belief cannot match the power of the general's ruthlessness. Croft, the man who can kill without feeling, can understand the general but has only scorn for the sensitive but indecisive Hearn. There are many minor characters in the book, each of whom reacts to war in his own unique way. The talk is filthy and one gets tired of it; but the book is an amazingly vivid revelation of the horrors and the bitterness of combat. Its mood is despair and it therefore lacks the catharsis which tragedy might bring to so cruel an experience.

*Abram, Son of Terah* is the story of a man's search for one God.

It is an imaginative account of Abram's life from boyhood ~~continues~~ the moment when he starts out in search of "a city which hath foundations." Abram, a child in the bustling household of Terah, comes to know all about his city with its merchants and slaves and commerce and religions. His mother is an ambitious woman, whose successful business makes her much less kindly and sympathetic than the easy-going Terah. There is a pompous brother, Nahor, and a half-brother, Haran, who understands the growing boy. Ur becomes alive as the author presents the details of its life and of its inhabitants. The impact of urban life upon the individual hasn't changed much through the centuries. Its anonymous and febrile quality, its insecurity and uncertainty, then as now, make men long for a god who gives experience meaning. It is Eber, an Amorite slave, who awakens Abram to the knowledge of one God. "Surely, if the most high God had made a plan for the life of Terah's youngest son, he must have had a hand in arranging these things. The Potter had shaped the clay from the beginning, and would continue its development. Now the future looked bright with promise to the young man lying under the black roof of the goat's-hair tent. His eyes closed and drowsiness took possession of him. Believe . . . trust . . . the most high God."

*Twelve O'clock High* is an exciting story which the movies are bound to use. The 918th Bomb Group in England has become completely demoralized. Too many badly planned missions have cracked its morale. Brigadier-General Frank Savage is given its command. His tough and hard drive restores their pride and makes them a group confident to project a daring raid over Germany. The detailed description of the raid and its effect upon the men is vividly told. The ingredients of the book are typical—the sergeant who is regularly busted, the sensitive young officer who has moral convictions, the brass hat who can think only of his promotion. But it is first-rate adventure and the reader will spend an exciting hour or two with it.

*The Time Is Noon* is a disheartening book. The setting is America and the year is 1929. It moves from life in a New England college to Wall Street, from Greenwich Village to the textile mills of North Carolina. Almost every character in the book fails to be a man. Charles Hoyt is a young wastrel with too much money and too little morality; Tom Robinson, popular in college, hasn't brains enough to understand what is going on; Lathrop Stone is intelligent but weak. Only Sol Krassovsky, forced out of college for an editorial in the school paper, has stamina enough to try to learn what democracy means. *The Time Is Noon* reveals how weak we

were 1929. Many of the symptoms of our softness and moral blindness are still with us. People live the same little lives and fail to respond to the challenges which the urgency of our time places before us. We are told here what happened to favored people in 1929. They failed abysmally. The book presumably is asking whether such people will fail again.

*Conspirator* is not a great book; but it is a dramatic one about a theme which may be ancient but which has found more frequent expression in our time—treason. Major Desmond Ferneaux-Lightfoot is a British aristocrat, a member of the army and a spy for the Soviet Union. He meets Harriet Prodsham, much younger than himself, and falls in love with her. After a happy honeymoon they settle in London. Gradually she begins to become suspicious of some of his activities. The story reaches its climax when Desmond learns from his superiors that there is nothing for him to do but to liquidate his wife. "He told himself he had known all along that the life of a revolutionary was far from an easy one and that it was taken for granted he was prepared for the most ultimate personal sacrifices; he was ashamed to find himself boggling at the first really difficult thing he had been asked to do." It is a highly melodramatic situation, but it reveals the radical shift in ethical standards which is affecting so many in our world. The relationship of the individual to the community is one of the major moral problems of our time.

**The Choice.** By PAUL SEVIER MINEAR. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. pp. 320. \$2.00.

**Fire.** By GEORGE R. STEWART. New York: Random House. pp. 336. \$3.00.

**The Naked and the Dead.** By NORMAN MAILER. New York: Rinehart & Co. pp. 721. \$4.00.

**Abram, Son of Terah.** By FLORENCE MARVYNE BAUER. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company. pp. 406. \$3.00.

**Twelve O'Clock High.** By BEIRNE LAY, JR. and SY BARTLETT. New York: Harper & Brothers. pp. 274. \$2.75.

**The Time Is Noon.** By HIRAM HAYDN. New York: Crown Publishers. pp. 561. \$3.50.

**Conspirator.** By HUMPHREY SLATER. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. pp. 184. \$2.75.



## Book Reviews

**Prayer and the Common Life.** By GEORGIA HARKNESS. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948. pp. 224. \$2.50.

Prayer for Georgia Harkness is something more than a "sincere desire" and something different from "faithful work." For her, it is prayer only when God and the doing of his will are at the center of it. In her latest book, *Prayer and the Common Life*, Dr. Harkness starts with the belief that prayer is a divine-human encounter (an I-thou relation) in which God takes the initiative, and with the conviction that "of all the things the world now desperately needs, none is more needed than an upsurge of vital, God-centered, intelligently grounded prayer." She develops her thesis under three main headings: the foundations, the methods, and the fruits of prayer.

The book is accurately titled, for it is precisely of prayer as it relates to life common to all of us that Miss Harkness treats. Here is no academic and stilted book of theoretical abstractions but a practical and readable work for laymen and ministers alike—a book indeed for everyone who really wants to know more about prayer. While evidences of a disciplined mind and of very careful scholarship are discovered on every page, the book is not difficult; on the contrary, it is easy, very easy to read. She has already demonstrated a unique ability in making our Christian faith clear for laymen while at the same time holding so rigidly to the highest standards of scholarship as to challenge and reward the most highly trained, with such books as *The Faith by Which the Church Lives* and *Understanding the Christian Faith*. And now, better than ever, she does it again with *Prayer and the Common Life*.

Here is a book on prayer that will help ministers as they in turn try to help their people in this important phase of their Christian life. It will be found equally useful as source material and as a basis for class or group discussion. I venture to predict, however, that its greatest value will be found in private reading and study. For the many who were convinced that George Buttrick had exhausted the subject in his splendid treatment of prayer, a rich surprise is in store. Georgia Harkness has discovered new territory to explore and she does it with uncanny skill. Hers cannot be considered in any sense a "repeat performance" of Dr. Buttrick's work. Moreover, I am sure that all who profited by the reading of the former will be enthusiastic about this more recent prize winner.

The last main division of the book, dealing as it does with the "fruits of prayer," is concerned with four major considerations: peace of mind; fear, loneliness, and grief; sin and guilt; prayer and the peace of the world. Anyone who knows Dr. Harkness and her great concern for world peace would have expected a chapter like the concluding one from her pen. No one in the church today is better qualified to write it. With keen psychological understanding, she sheds illumination upon these matters of common, everyday interest and importance. Here we are shown what we can get from prayer if we meet the conditions.

The conditions are set forth in the first section of the book under the heading, "The Foundations of Prayer," where the elements of prayer—adoration, thanksgiving, confession, petition, intercession, commitment, assurance and ascription to Christ—are analyzed.

The middle portion of the book concerns itself with the methods of prayer in a very practical way. After discussing hindrances such as self-sufficiency, spiritual dryness, impatience, distractions, wanderings of mind, and the lack of any real awareness of the need of prayer (which the author considers "the most formidable barrier, not only to prayer but to religion in general"), she gives rather full consideration to the ways of praying—times and places, private devotions, and corporate worship, including a brief discussion of the relationship of the radio to prayer and worship.

Dr. Harkness has written a book which I predict will enjoy a lasting influence. Her popular and easy-to-read treatment of highly intellectual content explains in part why *Prayer and the Common Life* was both the co-winner of the Abingdon-Cokesbury \$7,500 prize and the May selection of the Religious Book Club.

DONALD H. TIPPETT

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**The Challenge of New Testament Ethics.** By L. H. MARSHALL. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948. pp. 354. \$4.50.

This is a book which fills a long-standing need in Christian ethical studies. Its purpose is to present for the discerning and questing layman the central ethical principles of Jesus and Paul in nontheological language. Such efforts have been made before, certainly, but for the most part "popularizations" fall into banalities and the thinning out of important subtleties. Marshall, in a solid and painstaking scrutiny of the synoptic teaching material and the ethical passages of the Pauline epistles, has avoided both overtechnicality and oversimplicity. What emerges is a full and surprisingly systematic account of the Christian life. The morality of Jesus is drawn as one rooted in theology, holding inordinate self-love as the root of all sin both of the flesh and of the spirit. The good, as the inward "voluntary acceptance of the will of God," is illustrated by reference to personal virtues and attitudes on social problems. Marshall then struggles valiantly, and for the most part successfully (perhaps too successfully), to untangle the difficult paradoxes of Paul's thought, by defining Paul's main, oft-repeated phrases describing the Christian's "salvation."

This study is not without its shortcomings. I suppose one can never succeed in eliminating certain theological predispositions which one brings to the study of Jesus and Paul. Marshall is no exception. He reveals a clearly "liberal" theological slant, which at one point in particular results in a serious omission. While he affirms that the ethics of Jesus can be understood only on the basis of Jesus' avowal of the sovereignty of God, and while he recognizes that such sovereignty was for Jesus to be expressed shortly in eschatological consummation, Marshall too hastily slips over the relation of that eschatology to ethics. Liberal theology in general has been too prone to believe that an eschatological *Weltanschauung* leads inevitably to an "interim-ethic," which undermines the authority of Jesus' moral teachings. This is not necessarily the case. It only appears to be so on the grounds of the liberal's own world view. The impact of Jesus' eschatology on the content as well as on the mood of his message is more significant than Marshall grants.

Another weakness of the book, even granting its popularizing purpose, lies in its failure to indicate in any considerable fashion the effect of the ethics of the early church on the Gospel writers themselves, and to draw distinctions among different levels of tradition. That the authors of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and particularly

John, are editors as much as purveyors of the original ethical material they work upon, can hardly be gainsaid. To present the material of the Gospels as though all on the same level of authenticity and witness is quite too easy, and often distortive.

Marshall is concerned not only to present, but to present as a challenge, the ethics of the New Testament. The reader may or may not appreciate his homiletical proclivities. He gives much space to drawing lessons for modern life, generally pertinent and plausible ones. But for this reviewer's taste, the pattern of steady alternation between the statement of original principle and contemporary application becomes, after two hundred pages or so, too mechanical and (if one may use the word carefully) "preachy." Better perhaps more to have let the principles speak their own word of contemporary relevance. These inadequacies do not outweigh the indubitable merits of the book, in particular Marshall's adroit linguistic skill. His retranslations and interpolations of the Greek are remarkably illuminating and exhilarating. The key words of Jesus which are translated in the American Standard as "hypocrite," "meek," "poor in spirit," and the more troublesome Pauline terms, "justification," "adoption," etc., take on rich meaning at the hand of one whose language skill is quite evident. This book may serve in good stead as a study guide to answer the clamors of adult religious education classes for material which can show the challenge of biblical teaching to modern life.

WALDO BEACH

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**Christianity and Property.** Edited by JOSEPH F. FLETCHER. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1947. pp 221. \$2.50.

This is an unusually well-integrated volume of eight essays pursuing the historical development of Christian and especially Anglican thought concerning property. The theme insures that all contributors stick reasonably close to their subject, though it is to be expected that the chapters should vary markedly in length, style, and perspicacity. Originally ground through the mill of a conference on Christian social teaching held at the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1945, they were revised and ably edited by Professor Joseph F. Fletcher of that school, with the special objective of replacing the earlier *Property: Its Rights and Duties*, edited by Bishop Gore in 1913 and now long since out of print. The result is a compact volume of considerable usefulness.

The book opens with an essay on Old Testament teaching concerning property, by Dean Charles Lincoln Taylor, Jr., of the Episcopal Theological School. That on the New Testament is by Bishop R. S. M. Emrich of Michigan. "The Way of the Early Church," traced by Edward Rochie Hardy, Jr., of Berkeley Divinity School through almost as many pages as are devoted to Old Testament and New Testament combined, is followed by a paper of equal length but increasing technicality, on the Middle Ages, by Frederic Hastings Smyth, Superior of the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth. The Reformation's attitudes toward property, by Paul Louis Lehmann, then associate editor of the Westminster Press, and now at Princeton Theological Seminary, completes the preliminary chapters prior to Miss Scudder's delightful contribution concerning "Anglican thought on property." The summary and the high point of the book is reached in the editor's concluding "Theological perspective."

On the whole the work has impressed this reviewer as a decidedly superior

compilation. For the most part it is lucid and, as said above, has an unusually high degree of cohesion for a symposium. The treatment is not limited to the strictly historical, as each writer attempts to focus the insights gained from his specialization upon the present-day issues between Christian ethics and contemporary ideas concerning property. To do more than suggest how this is attempted is quite beyond the scope of a review, but it may be fairly said that the success of the various contributors varies as widely as their number. It is unfortunate for the wider usefulness of what would otherwise be a book of very considerable significance, that the scope of these essays is limited in the contemporary period to a consideration of Anglican thought. It is to be regretted that each period of church history receives more attention than the teaching of Jesus or of either Old or New Testament. The broader usefulness of the book is further compromised by the technical language and general treatment of several of the periods—which brings to mind this reviewer's perpetual quarrel with the writers of religious literature in this country, who seem entirely unable to shake themselves free of the specialized jargon of philosophy, theology, and history. Unfortunately this work, able as it is, will prove unintelligible to all but the most interested and acute laymen, and hence its usefulness will be largely restricted—as is that of an amazingly large share of religious writing in our time—to the clergy and the specialist.

Professor Vida D. Scudder's readable and engaging essay is the one exception to this generalization, and it sets significantly the issue I have phrased above. The most engaging thing in the book, actually, is its dedication—entered into as a conspiracy by the editor and six other contributors—to Miss Scudder, now long an emeritus professor at Wellesley, but for a great deal longer, and in an amazingly versatile manner, a Christian socialist churchwoman and active exponent of the need of continuous reinterpretation of the Christian ethic in modern culture. In a very small way this reviewer himself is indebted to Miss Scudder in like manner, as are the writers of these essays, and he shares their conviction that "there is no other person in the American scene to whom a book on Christianity and property could so rightly be dedicated." But he would push back the date of her initial sharpening of the growing edge of ethical thought at least five years prior to 1898. She was an active member of the miniscule Society of Christian Socialists in Boston and went on record in 1893 with an address to the group on the relevance of the socialist critique of traditional Christian ethics. I, for one, am glad this book was written and that it was dedicated to Miss Scudder. It is to be recommended for a permanent place in the working library of all students of its general subject, certainly including many who are not Anglicans!

C. HOWARD HOPKINS

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**The Reconstruction of Humanity.** By PITIRIM A. SOROKIN. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1948. pp. 241. \$2.75.

Here is a new book by the distinguished social scientist and former chairman of the Sociology Department of Harvard University.

In previous volumes, *The Crisis of Our Age* and *Man and Society in Calamity*, Professor Sorokin has described our sensate culture, the decline of supersensory values, and the inevitable calamity which has visited society as a consequence. In his new book he undertakes an even larger assignment: he studies the transformation of

humanity. He assumes what religion has assumed for a long time: you can't have a new world without new men; you can't have a new society without a new creature. So Professor Sorokin examines our culture, pointing out where its science, its education, its political institutions, its religion, need correction and improvement if they are to create the altruistic men and women who are a necessity if the modern world is to know peace.

In the opening chapters Professor Sorokin discusses "Quack Cures for War and Impotent Plans for Peace." First he examines democracy. He refers to the major wars between 600 B.C. and A.D. 1925, and observes "that democratic nations have been no less belligerent or more peaceful than monarchic and autocratic nations" (p. 8). Democracy by itself is no solution.

Again he examines such contemporary enthusiasms as the United Nations and Federal World Government. In each instance he finds the intentions good, but the prognosis not too encouraging. The United Nations organization is "shot through with contradictions," "decisions cannot be enforced," ". . . it is neither a debating society nor an organ of world government." After three years "it has revealed its impotence to settle any serious conflict among the great powers."

In regard to the Federal World Government, there is an optimistic notion that a single sovereign world state will guarantee peace. The record of history does not justify that optimism. Civil wars have been more prevalent and more violent than international wars. Between 500 B.C. and A.D. 1925 there were only 969 international wars, but there were 1,623 civil wars. World government by itself is no guarantee of peace.

With equal candor Professor Sorokin examines the claims of capitalism and its opposite, some form of statism—communism, socialism, fascism. He is not impressed with the wisdom of either free economic enterprise or totalitarian government planning. Both capitalism and socialism are very ancient forms of social organization. Our modern experiments are not new. Each form has its distinct advantages and disadvantages. It should be kept in mind, however, that socialism has never been able to do expert planning over a long period except for war. Both at home and abroad it is given to militarism. There is compulsion instead of consent at home, and force rather than diplomacy abroad.

These truths will not be relished by a generation that is much in love with half-truths. And yet, these things need to be said. All of us need to be recalled to the actual record of human history. Professor Sorokin has done us all a favor in indicating where some of our most private prejudices, in spite of Gallup Polls, still remain prejudices.

According to Professor Sorokin, a peaceful world requires altruistic men and women. Our sensate culture, however, with its materialistic values, its endocrinological and sexual interpretation of man, is creating egotistic men and women. This sensate culture relativizes (terrible word!) all values and norms. The line of distinction between true and false, right and wrong, is blurred. "We live in an age in which no value from God to private property is universally accepted." The result is anarchy. In such a society, men come to rely more and more upon brute force.

There is no transformation of humanity without a change in this basic premise of our culture. This creates the real problem of the book. How is our culture to be changed? Professor Sorokin tells us of the great masters of altruism: Buddha, Jesus, St. Francis, and others. Their example will doubtless prove helpful. But it



is not until he reaches page 231 that he seriously discusses how the proposed change is to be achieved, and then he devotes less than ten pages to the most important part of his subject.

Kind words are spoken about the past experience of mankind, the fact that a decadent sensate culture has often shifted to an ideational culture and that humanity, after many trials and errors, has been able frequently to choose the right path, sound plans, and capable leaders. The book closes with the pious hope that evidences of such a change are already dimly seen and that "the replacement of the old by the new is greatly assisted by the historic process itself" (p. 238).

One does not like to quarrel with any of these encouraging words. They are good so far as they go. But one puts down the book with a feeling that professor Sorokin does not actually go very far. If this is the best that we can do with our social science, then we will be wise to sit a little longer at the feet of the ancients, St. Paul, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Luther and Calvin. They did not speak of an "Infinite Manifold," containing supersensate experience. They spoke of God, Infinite Will and Purpose. The problem of reconstruction was a problem of overcoming man's pride, disobedience and self-will. The solution of this problem was the reconciliation of God and man. The agency which brought about this reconciliation was the love of God in Christ. It is not an easy solution, but after reading the outpourings of contemporary sociology, one is impressed with how intelligent, rational, and far-reaching it was. The Apostle Paul has a word which might still be studied by our contemporaries: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

PAUL A. WOLFE

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**Behold the Spirit.** By ALAN W. WATTS. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1947. pp. 254. \$2.75.

The author of this book, an authority on Zen Buddhism and at present Episcopal chaplain at Northwestern University, completes with Gerald Heard and Aldous Huxley the triad of British writers who are attempting a mystical interpretation of religion in which Christianity and Eastern religions are synthesized. Watts' debt to Zen Buddhism is particularly heavy. The influence of its thought is sensed strongly in all the basic insights of the volume.

On a background of a modified Spenglerian philosophy of history, the author pictures our era as the dawn of a third historical period of Christianity, representing a synthesis of Medieval childhood and Protestant adolescence, in which will appear a profound and inward comprehension of religion. God will be known primarily under the form of the Holy Spirit, not distant or apart from man, but immediately at hand, and religion will go behind its symbols to mystical apprehension.

The Christian doctrine of the Incarnation is of primary interest throughout the treatment. This incarnation did not take place only once, for God is incarnate within all men. Man need not and cannot, therefore, climb to God, since God has descended to man. Man's part is simply that of realizing and accepting this fact. Jesus dramatized this truth, but the fact is universal and eternal. Salvation is not an achievement; it is the simple realization by way of mysticism of this verity. Moral living is a result of this realization, a spontaneous expression of joy and gratitude for what God has done. This view is called "incarnational mysticism." It follows that God and the world are not at enmity, since God has "wedded himself to humanity."

In two of the most stimulating chapters God is pictured neither pantheistically nor deistically, but as "non-dual," including within himself all opposites and even what is called evil. He is love, joy, beauty. He created not to achieve any purpose but that "man shall attain the divine life of purposelessness" (p. 178). Man shall enjoy, adore, give thanks, and accept his lot in all humility.

Shortage of space will not permit a satisfactory critique. The reader will sense a certain inadequacy in the treatment of evil, the evaluation of Luther and Protestantism, the philosophy of history, and in the attempt to bring about real union between Christian theology and Zen-inspired "incarnational mysticism." Yet this will be incidental to a truly valuable work on the nature and practice of religion. Everyone, even those not sympathetic to the mystical approach to religion, will find in it insights of great value. Students and practitioners of mysticism will find it of special value both for its new understandings and also for the clarification brought to many of the perennial problems of mystical religion. Probably the greatest lack that will confront the reader is that no really helpful suggestions are given that will aid in the realization of the fact of union of God and man. It is probably true that there is no one method for doing this, but surely the author knows that Zen Buddhism has worked out certain techniques of concentration which aid in the awakening of *satori*. A similar method, but one suited for members of the Christian community, is sorely needed if the thought of this work is to be translated into practice. As it here stands it will represent an attractive theory to most readers, but the unresolved problem of removing those "complexities" which hide the fact of union with God (p. 96) will prevent its becoming what its author no doubt hopes for it—a living, energizing instrument of the Spirit.

J. CALVIN KEENE

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**St. Francis of Assisi: The Legends and Lauds.** Edited by OTTO KARRER.

Translated by N. WYDENBRUCK. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1948. pp. xvi-302. \$3.00.

The writings of St. Francis of Assisi, slight in volume but significant in spirit, have not been adequately available in English since Father Robinson translated them in 1905. Their reissue, properly modified and enhanced by modern researches in Franciscan sources, has long since been called for. With Francis' own brief works there might justifiably have been published the annotated translations of select portions from early Lives and Legends. The fascinating corpus of early Franciscan literature has, however, to be studied at the greatest disadvantage by those limited to English. They must procure, as best they can, books generally out of print. In most cases they must utilize translated fragments unevenly edited.

The present work, as its title indicates, does not answer the larger need alluded to above. It constitutes an anthology of judiciously selected materials drawn from early legends, and writings generally attributed to Francis. Included are generous excerpts from the *Legend of the Three Companions*, Celano's *Lives*, Bonaventure's official biography, and the *Little Flowers*. A collection of readings is entitled: "The Writings of Brother Leo and His Companions." This incorporates passages from the *Mirror of Perfection* in its variant forms. The "Lauds" comprise the Canticle of the Sun, the Beatitudes, Praises of the Virtues, the Exposition of the Lord's Prayer, a Benediction, and a Letter. The Testament concludes the volume.

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This book, produced out of much editorial learning, provides an admirable if necessarily arbitrary and restricted set of selections. These are given a good brief preface, introductions for each body of sources, and rigidly compressed, scholarly notes at the back of the volume. The chief values of the anthology are: (1) the orderly arrangement of many choice passages, unified in a fashion generally true to the larger bodies of sources and the spirit of Francis; (2) a system of inconspicuous but pivotal references that relate the anthology to the larger corpus of original texts; and (3) a beautifully readable translation of probably more Franciscan source samplings than have hitherto been gathered in one volume.

Defects, though significant, are not fatally prejudicial to the attainments already listed. The work does, indeed, derive a remarkable unity from the deft articulation of introductions and commentaries with primary selections. But something of the certainty and brevity with which knotty issues are resolved seems traceable to ignorance of, or disregard for, the latest critical findings in both Catholic and Protestant scholarship. Not only the titles, but also the more signal influences of Gratien, Sessevalle, Huber, Moorman, and many others are missing from the work. Contrasted with the ample acquaintance with primary documents and older critical materials is the apparently complete unawareness of Moorman's significant reassessment of virtually all the Franciscan sources. Before being issued to the English public, the present edition and translation should have been supplied with an explanation of the limitations governing its production—war circumstances included, if such were involved. Recent literature and its bearing upon vital editorial conclusions should have been appended, at the very least.

Yet, however far-reaching the interpretative slant given by this unequivocally Roman Catholic work, one central fact is gratefully acknowledged: a serious, purchasable volume of Franciscan translations is now available for the delightful edification of class, parish, and home. It is lamentable that the work could not have been conceived and executed to embody, also, the brief but invaluable major writings of the Saint.

RAY C. PETRY

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**Humanist as Hero: The Life of Sir Thomas More.** By THEODORE MAYNARD.  
New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. pp. ix-261. \$3.00.

This book is misnamed. To Dr. Maynard, Sir Thomas More is more than hero, and humanist only in some special sense that he emphasizes as little as possible. The story of the great Lord Chancellor is presented as a veritable saint's legend, though an incomplete one, since it ends with the martyrdom. That it was not carried farther was perhaps designed as a concession to non-Catholic readers. If this was so, the concession is largely negated by other features of the book.

The greater number of Protestant historians who have written of Sir Thomas More, including Professor R. W. Chambers, have regarded him as a saint in all but the technical Roman Catholic sense. This in spite of the fact that they have dared call attention to some paradoxes in his character and career: his levity and his asceticism, his *Utopia* and his controversy with Tyndale, his early-expressed dislike of public service and the fatal eminence which he achieved. Scholars have seen in More a putative humanist who retreated into medievalism. And yet they have mostly insisted on the purity of his motives and have given their entire admiration to the man who died, falsely condemned, for conscience's sake.

Dr. Maynard has done his subject small service by seeking to deny all ambiguities. What might be permitted to More's son-in-law Roper in writing *The Mirrour of Vertue in Worldly Greatnes* may be denied to a contemporary biographer, if he is truly attempting to set before us the image of the living man. There is no question of debunking a pious legend. Most serious detraction that has been aimed at Sir Thomas has fallen wide of the mark. But there were human flaws in his make-up, imperfect leadings of mind, and the present biographer's almost unrestricted eulogy will not convince those who do not accept More's character as an article of faith.

It is especially strange that Dr. Maynard introduces the term "humanist" into his title, for it is clear that he distrusts humanism. Besides indicating More's study of Greek at Oxford and his friendship with Linacre, Grocyn, Colet, and Erasmus, this account features little that identifies him with the New Learning. Dr. Maynard seems particularly to wish to dissociate More from Erasmus. He argues that the charge that Erasmus laid the egg hatched by Luther is a false one. On a recent rereading of *The Praise of Folly* he confesses that he found it "sufficiently innocuous," but he definitely dislikes the Dutch humanist.

The author is probably on surer critical ground when he discounts the more liberal aspects of the *Utopia*. More did indeed write *Utopia*, but he was himself scarcely a Utopian. One corner of his mind was devoted to free speculation. Once in his mature years he opened this cabinet and revealed its contents; then he sealed it again with almost Carthusian rigor. It is largely irrelevant to note parallels between the polity of Utopia and the state policies with which More may be loosely connected. On the other hand, it is futile to attempt to explain away the inconsistencies that exist between the book and the man who wrote it. Once in a way Sir Thomas More gave free rein to tendencies of mind that at other times he held in check. The *Utopia* was as much a part of his nature as his merry jests, but he found the latter a safer escape valve than the former.

*Humanist as Hero* was evidently written as a work of zeal. It is the prime tribute to Sir Thomas More that four hundred years after his death he should inspire such zeal. But the zeal of the author is not merely personal but sectarian. This is bound to offend some readers of the book. Its Roman Catholic bias is obvious in every chapter, not infrequently in ways unpleasant to the Protestant reader, who will not admit a number of the doctrinal assumptions of the author, and who sees the history of church and state in England and Europe in a different light than does Dr. Maynard. The free employment of the term "heretic" indicates an attitude more than historical. But when the author's point of view is taken into account, much profit may be drawn from these pages.

THOMAS H. ENGLISH

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**On the Resolution of Science and Faith.** By WENDELL THOMAS. New York: Island Press, 1947. pp. ix-300. \$3.50.

This interesting book is a well-written propagandistic exposition and defense of philosophical monism. The exploratory Part I deals with Greek, Medieval and Modern, especially German and Anglo-American philosophy. The analytical Part II summarizes quite successfully recent scientific theories of the nature of space, time, and the cosmos. In the constructive Part III the author attempts to synthesize modern science, Greek and modern monistic tendencies, George Fox's mysticism,

the religion of Jesus, and the monism of the Hindu Vedanta. References, a bibliography (restricted to the items quoted or cited in the text), and a good index complete the book. Professor Thomas, who is a member of the Society of Friends, taught in India for five years, where he came under the spell of Vedanta monism.

Throughout the book dualism is under attack. In his ardor to uphold monism the author borrows his chief method from the arsenal of the enemy. He drives a dualistic wedge between Anaximander and Anaximenes, holding the former to be a monist and the latter a dualist. Jesus is claimed for monism, but St. Paul is charged with an unpardonable blunder in separating the spirit from the flesh. The dualism of the Johannine writings is even more reprehensible. Because of their dualistic premises and conclusions Democritus, Plato, and Aristotle are dubbed "blind guides." St. Thomas Aquinas "did his brilliant best" but failed to overcome the Greek dualism. Descartes removed the scholastic obscurations from Aristotle's dualism only to reveal its more "stark and perplexing" character. Kant and Hegel and their numerous disciples developed new fallacious dualisms. Although Marx, Dewey, and the emergent evolutionists seriously attempted to construct truly monistic metaphysical doctrines, they actually created new dualisms.

Following this line of argument uncritically and dogmatically, Professor Thomas reaches this remarkable conclusion: "The dualisms of the classical Greeks and their modern followers thus seem to be the much too persistent effects of the early degeneration of Western philosophy from Anaximander to Anaximenes and Pythagoras" (p. 173). A little further on he suggests this remedy: "For the abolition of all dualisms it would seem that a radical course must be adopted; we may have to go back beyond Aristotle, Plato, and Democritus, back beyond Anaximenes with his original dualism between soul and the world—to the monism of Anaximander" (p. 174). Although Professor Thomas admits that we have only a few extant fragments containing the teachings of Anaximander, he finds in these the one doctrine he is seeking. "Anaximander called 'the boundless' God, and he may have considered this all-powerful God to be the all-good soul of the cosmos" (p. 174). But whether he did or not is really of no consequence because the Vedanta makes this truth crystal clear. By such reasoning Professor Thomas reaches the questionable conclusion that the monism of the Vedanta is superior to each and every philosophical system that has arisen in Western culture.

The concluding chapter of Professor Thomas' book shows him to be well to the left in his social philosophy. He advocates rejecting "the violent national state in favor of a world state resting on a totally nonviolent foundation." He evidently thinks that such a state will be "an economically classless society," that it will spring from "co-operative soil-rooted communities," and that the local communities composing it may each have a "Henry George type of government, involving commodity money." (See p. 263.)

D. S. ROBINSON

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**Religion in the Twentieth Century.** Edited by VERGILIUS FERM. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1948. pp. xv-470. \$5.00.

Vergilius Ferm, the liberal Lutheran philosopher of the College of Wooster, is both a productive scholar and a competent editor. He has presented us with a volume in the Twentieth Century Series of the Philosophical Library; Religion now is added to Sociology, Psychology, English Political Thought, Education, and



Philosophy, in this set of informing volumes. The book before us is an account of the living religions of the world, a field covered in one way or another by several other works published in the past few years.

The reader's first question, then, is: How does Ferm's book differ from other accounts of religion? The main points are these: (1) Many of the religions are treated by believers in them, and the expositions are always sympathetic. It follows that there is little or no criticism, and that the bibliographies consist almost wholly of friendly accounts. This method has its merits as well as its defects. The "internal" view in each case is authoritative, and the reader is free to exercise his own judgment. On the other hand, a philosophical reader would profit by the opportunity to consider the main arguments against Hinduism, or Roman Catholicism, or Protestant liberalism, or Christian Science. (2) The choice of "religions" is determined by a rather vague principle. There is no pretense at completeness, yet we find the Society of Friends, conservative Protestantism, liberal Protestantism, Jehovah's Witnesses, naturalistic humanism, and the Salvation Army included as "religions." It seems strange to call these various branches of Christianity and secular humanism by this name. Ferm explains his selections by calling them "larger divisions of religious ideologies and practices." He justifies inclusion of various Christian sects on the ground of their claim to special divine revelations—as by Swedenborg and Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy. Ferm repudiates the word "cult" because of "its abuse as a term of scorn by self-appointed orthodox."

The volume is throughout competent. Among the most informing and reliable accounts are those of Hinduism by Swami Nikhilananda; of Buddhism by the late A. K. Coomaraswamy; of Anglo-Catholicism by W. Norman Pittenger; of Christian Science by Arthur James Todd, a Christian Scientist who for many years was chairman of the department of sociology at Northwestern University; and of the Ramakrishna Vedanta movement by Swami Satprakashananda of St. Louis. It should be added that Nathan Homer Knorr, successor of J. F. Rutherford, gives an unusually clear account of the rationale of Jehovah's Witnesses.

The Rosicrucians and the Theosophists were omitted from the volume at their own request, since they desire their faiths to be called philosophies instead of religions. Spiritualists did not even respond to the editor's invitation. No mention is made of the Ascended Masters, or the Great I Am.

Some of the treatments, such as that of conservative Protestantism by Andrew Kerr Rule, deal more with the spirit and general attitude of the movement than with its creed. The expositions are somewhat uneven both in merit and in scope. But every chapter is a fresh, sincere, and valuable orientation. The book deserves the attention of every student of religion. Only two minor typographical errors were noted (on pp. 114 and 374).

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN

Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts.

**Wellsprings of the American Spirit.** Edited by F. ERNEST JOHNSON. A publication of the Institute for Religious and Social Studies. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. pp. ix-241. \$2.50.

This volume of addresses contains interpretation, evaluation and criticism of the various forms of expression in which the American people have most characteristically made explicit the values of the democratic tradition. Though semipopular in character, the series of addresses makes an important contribution to the litera-

ture of the sources of American culture, especially of its values and ideals. Prepared by outstanding authorities in the respective fields, the essays are packed with vital information and stimulating analysis. They reflect the variety of spiritual experience which lies at the roots of America's pluralistic culture.

The first four essays deal with the wellsprings which were freely flowing in colonial and early constitutional days. "The Puritan Tradition" is interpreted and evaluated by Herbert W. Schneider, "The Dissenting Tradition" by John T. McNeill, "The Enlightenment Tradition" by Ralph Henry Gabriel, and "The Religion of the Founding Fathers" by Robert C. Hartnett, S.J. These essays are highly informative and reflect sharp divergencies in interpretation. The chief clash is between Gabriel and Hartnett on the meaning of the Enlightenment as reflected in a man like Jefferson. Gabriel gives a marked religious interpretation to Jefferson's spiritual outlook. This is also evident in Schneider's treatment in his recent work, *The History of American Philosophy*. Hartnett is obviously hostile to Jefferson. His writings, we are told, are "an ideological crazy quilt." "He was a fanatical individualist." He shows "scant respect . . . for the sacred writings of Christianity." "He never wrote a line which showed any real talent for philosophical or theological thinking." Jefferson, says Hartnett, stands alone over against the religious and political thought of the great framers of the Constitution. Hartnett's view is best understood against the background not of the eighteenth century but of his own dogmatic and creedal definition of religion: "I mean belief in the existence of a transcendent Being, endowed with intelligence and free will, who created the universe, who governs it by His Providence, and who will reward and punish human beings according to whether they carry out his will as it is known to them. Such a belief involves, of course, belief in human intelligence capable of grasping with certitude suprasensible realities, in human freedom of choice, and in the immortality of the human spirit." The variety of interpretation of the early traditions of America is one of the characteristics of the American spirit even today.

The next two essays deal with "The Ideal of Religious Liberty." O. Frederick Nolde presents a Protestant view and Louis Finkelstein a Jewish view. The essay on the Catholic view of this subject was not available for publication. Nolde's essay is an excellent outline and syllabus of the conception of religious liberty held by a growing number of American Protestants. Finkelstein's essay is more historical in nature. He holds that the development within Judaism "has much in common with the processes by which scholarly and scientific truth generally are achieved."

Following the discussion of religious liberty are five essays of a distinctively different character. Harold Rugg interprets "The Spirit of the Frontier"; John Herman Randall, Jr., "The Spirit of American Philosophy"; Odell Shepard, "The Spirit of American Literature"; James Marshall, "The Spirit of American Education"; and William G. Constable, "The Spirit of American Art." The essay, "The Spirit of American Law" was not available for publication. Rugg and Randall both write essays in the same general field. Randall's view makes the spirit of American philosophy primarily that of men like Pierce, James, Dewey, Woodbridge, Whitehead, or Cohen. Space permits only the pointing out of the controversial character of his thesis. He is probably right in stressing "(1) a pluralistic temper, (2) an experimental attitude, (3) an egalitarian spirit, and (4) an institutional approach." Less persuasive is the tendency of the essay to center this in pragmatism

and naturalism and, above all, in New York City. Provincialism, both religious and nonreligious, is still part of the American temper, unfortunately.

The next four essays are discussions of special problems. Lyman Bryson analyzes admirably some aspects of "Technology and Freedom." Elinore M. Herrick pursues "Woman's Battle for Status." Channing Tobias interprets the Negro question again in "The Struggle for Cultural Unity." And Mark Starr writes a comprehensive chapter in the field of labor relations by discussing "Labor's Coming of Age." The concluding statement is by the editor. As always, this summary chapter is superbly done. He stresses "the necessity of recovering some unifying spiritual principle of life, a synthesis of thought and of ideals, which the Western world has conspicuously lacked since the medieval synthesis ceased to be controlling in the culture of the West." This quest for unity stands in sharp contrast to the pluralism emphasized by Randall. The reviewer believes that more steps are being taken toward the goal of organic spiritual unity in American life than this book might indicate. Anyone seeking that unity will find the whole discussion exceedingly valuable.

WALTER G. MUELDER

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**The Future of the American Jew.** By MORDECAI M. KAPLAN. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948. pp. xx-571. \$6.00.

This imposing and erudite volume represents Dr. Kaplan's most recent studies in that philosophy of Jewish life which he first presented in *Judaism as a Civilization* (Macmillan, 1934). The author portrays American Jewry as highly organized and seething with surface activity; yet he finds that a large segment of it suffers from spiritual maladjustment and emotional confusion, caused on the one hand externally by the pressure of anti-Semitism, and on the other internally through ignorance of Jewish values, indifference to a religion deemed more or less irrelevant to modern needs, and disquieting doubts as to the purpose and advisability of perpetuating Judaism in a generally unfriendly world. This very conflict in the soul of the American Jew has arisen as a by-product of Emancipation, when, with the gates of the Ghetto thrown wide, Jews were invited to issue forth—often at the cost of exchanging their entire traditional culture, their accustomed way of life for that of the nations among which they were to live on new terms of equality. Endeavoring to preserve something of their heritage, many Jews sought to compress the all-embracing complex of Judaism into a religious sect and nothing more, in the hope that complete integration with the majority group might the more readily ensue. But to Kaplan, Judaism comprises far more than a sect; he describes it rather as a *religious civilization*, "the ensemble of the following organically interrelated elements of culture: a feeling of belonging to a common land, a continuing history, a living language and literature, a common mores, laws, and arts, with religion as the integrating and soul-giving factor of all these elements" (p. 35).

Thus, the "affirmative" American Jew who seeks to preserve his Jewish identity and to cultivate the totality of Judaism lives, according to the author's definition, in two civilizations, yet without conflict between the two. As an American his political allegiance is given without reservation to the land of his birth or adoption; culturally he is in every sense identified with the larger American community; but no less does he hold membership in the Jewish religious community, thereby enjoying cultural affiliation with Jews throughout the world, and especially

with the Jewry of Palestine. The presence of Jewish or any other like culture or "civilization" within the framework of our national life, serving the larger American community of which it is a constituent part, is in every way compatible with the highest concept of American democracy—political monism and religio-cultural pluralism, so the author contends.

In order again to be a bearer of salvation to Jews, Judaism must undergo a complete reconstruction in its social structure, its traditional outlook and way of life, and the scope of its creative activity, according to Professor Kaplan. Under the name *Reconstruction* he sets forth an over-all program which he would superimpose upon the three present religious interpretations of American Judaism: Reform, Conservatism, and Orthodoxy. These are his six main objectives: "(1) The rebuilding of the Land of Israel as the creative center of Judaism. (2) The creation of an adequate social structure for democratic Jewish life in the Diaspora. (3) The redirection of Jewish education to conform with the conception of Judaism as a religious civilization. (4) The revitalization of Jewish religion. (5) The stimulation of Jewish cultural creativity in literature and the arts. (6) The participation of Jewry in social movements that seek ampler freedom, stricter justice, and better co-operation among men and nations" (p. 36). The implementation of this program, it is expected, will reawaken within the Jewish people the "corporate will to live and to function as a source of human good." That Jewry has lost that corporate will may seriously be questioned.

Dr. Kaplan is convinced that the Reconstructionist Movement's effort "to join the life of the individual with that of the Jewish people, and the life of the people with that of mankind will inevitably lead to a renewal of religious faith" (p. 538). He therefore devotes a lengthy section of his book to the criticism and revision of existing theologies in the direction of greater relevance to the spiritual needs of the modern Jew. He restates the Jewish ethic, discusses new criteria for the modification of Jewish law and ritual usage, and offers a program for intensified education.

Dr. Kaplan would eliminate the doctrines of the divine election and the mission of Israel from his new theology in the rather surprising contention that they bespeak arrogance or religious chauvinism, as if Israel were more favored spiritually than any other people. Yet the reproof of an Amos, speaking in God's name, hardly strikes the note of arrogance: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I visit your iniquities upon you." Not so much as a privilege but as a duty, and occasionally as a trying responsibility, did the Rabbis regard Israel's election; certainly the doctrine did not serve them as an excuse to disparage other peoples or other religions. If Israel stood in a special relationship with God, that meant only that a different and perhaps more difficult way of life was required of him. He was charged with the task of spreading the moral and ethical principles of his tradition throughout the world.

Other of Dr. Kaplan's conclusions are to be accepted with reservations. His pessimistic survey of the Jewish scene ill accords with the voluntary self-taxation that now obtains in far greater measure than ever before. When a community of five millions sets itself the annual task of raising a quarter of a billion dollars for the purposes of relief and rehabilitation in foreign countries, then there may be reason to suppose that Jewish loyalties and sense of responsibility retain some degree of vigor, and that the Jew's traditional devotion to the cause of social amelioration has not wholly waned. Moreover, most Jews still find themselves drawn to one of the three major interpretations of Judaism.

Dr. Kaplan's presentation of Judaism as a religious civilization in the American scene is subject to the same criticism that has been directed against cultural pluralism in general, that it tends even at best to divide and fragmentize rather than to unite the various elements in American life. Judaism has always been primarily the *religious* expression of the Jewish people. To hold that a full religious life may be achieved only within the framework of a religious civilization does not accord with the experience of the great mass of American Jews who have found no difficulty or conflict between loyalty to Judaism as a religion in the broadest meaning of the term and devotion to American culture, to the American pattern of life. They feel no need of a supplemental cultural pattern.

Manifestly all is not well with American Jewry. No prophet can foretell what the future may hold, whether it be dark or bright. There is dissatisfaction and there is uneasiness. The leaders of every wing of Judaism are laboring to make the tradition more meaningful, to dissipate ignorance, and to strengthen the loyalties of Jews that they may live with deepened faith and dignity and "function as a source of human good" in the days ahead as they have sought to do in the past. Dr. Kaplan's great contribution may well lie in his compelling restatement of the problems faced by the American Jew rather than in his analysis of the measures he believes necessary to their solution.

A. STANLEY DREYFUS

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**Christianity and the Children of Israel.** By A. ROY ECKARDT. New York: King's Crown Press, 1948. pp. xvi-223. \$3.00.

It is a somewhat delicate task for a Jew to review A. Roy Eckardt's *Christianity and the Children of Israel*, showing that the widespread evil of Jew-hatred is a Christian problem and that Christendom must do something about it. An endorsement of this judgment would come with better grace from a Christian. All that he can do under the circumstances is to discuss the general ideas of the book with detached objectivity.

While various factors enter into the making of anti-Semitism—social, economic, racial, and psychological—the author confines himself to the religious factor. The church, he believes, bears the lion's share of responsibility for the prevalence of this disease among Christian people by preaching that Jews bear the guilt of the crucifixion, that they are under divine punishment for rejecting Jesus as the Christ, and that they adhere to an inferior religion. The blame is attached specifically to the absolutist positions of Roman Catholicism and orthodox Protestantism and to the missionary drives to convert the Jews and to deny Judaism a place in the divine economy, despite its being the mother of Christianity. The author criticizes also the relativism of liberal Christianity for its failure to deal adequately with the subject, a failure which stems from its inadequate conception of the depth of human depravity and the consequent easy solutions of the evil by means of social reform and education. Taking his stand with the neo-Reformation thinkers—Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Reinhold and H. Richard Niebuhr and Paul Tillich—he maintains that "at the least anti-Semitism is a particularly devilish illustration of original sin" and "can be an explicit and specific form of rebellion against the God of universal justice. At the most *Judenhass*, in its Christian form, may be interpreted as resulting from the hatred of Christians for Christ. If the latter interpretation appears extreme, we may say more cautiously that Christian anti-

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Semitism would appear to be in some kind of causal relationship with these factors: the Jewishness of Jesus, the Jewish character of Christianity, and the ambivalent nature of Christian attitudes toward Christ and the Jews" (p. 65).

The dark record of religious hatred and pride is brightened by fine insights of individual Christian thinkers, both Catholic and Protestant, orthodox and liberal, and particularly by the heroic efforts cited in the chapter on "The Continental Church and Nazi Anti-Semitism." It is true, as the author points out, that "the German church lacked a positive program for combating anti-Semitism as well as all other social evils" and that it did practically nothing until its own foundations were attacked and anti-Semitism had already struck in full force (pp. 97-98). The fact remains that, in the face of grave danger, individual Christians and the Confessional Church resisted nazification and in loyalty to God fought anti-Semitism in the church. Far more creditable is the record of the Dutch Reformed Church. Before it was itself attacked, it unequivocally reaffirmed its solidarity with the Jews: "According to God's providence, the Jews have lived among us for centuries and are bound up with us in a common history and a common responsibility. The commandment of the Savior to love our neighbors refers to them as it does to any other neighbor" (p. 99). In a pastoral letter it declared: "The enormous and unrestrained hatred of the Jews comes from natural aversion for the 'Jewish God' and the 'Jewish Bible,' for they, like nothing else, reveal the true nature of paganism" (p. 100).

These remarkable examples of witnessing to God offer us hope for the future. Agreeing with the author that "the ultimate solution of social arrogance does not lie in anything man may do but comes as a result of repentance through the grace of God," we must stress human effort and resolution—the evident marks of repentance—as means of salvation. Sincere belief and thought have power over the human soul.

The book is a call to Christians to humility and to self-criticism. If Christianity remains complacent in the face of the evils that blight society, it must resign itself to frustration and futility.

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**The Christian Way in Race Relations.** Edited by WILLIAM STUART NELSON. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. pp. ix-256. \$2.50.

In the past few years many studies have been made and a number of books written dealing with the question of race and minorities. Many of these have been quite scientific and have made use of the latest techniques in sociological research and the recent developments in anthropological studies. The classic study is the monumental work by Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, which apparently has set the pattern for recent works. There have also been some attempts to fictionalize the problem—some with reasonable success.

Americans are thus becoming aware of the profound significance of the problem of race in any endeavor to influence other nations struggling with post-war dislocations to accept democracy. Christian America has confidence in the basic concepts and principles of her faith and believes that the application of these in all areas of conflict, guided by the findings of the social sciences, will strengthen America's position as a world power and enable her to present her way of life as an exhibit to the nations of the world.

Therefore it is like a refreshing breeze in the arid heat of summer to discover a study whose total outlook is Christian, whose every move is expressive of the ideals and principles of the Christian faith, and where the attempt is made to look at every aspect of the problem in all areas from the vantage point of a deep religious experience. It is a symposium in which thirteen leaders, specialists in their particular fields, make separate contributions, but at the same time have so correlated their material as to present a continuity of thought. There are six sections, the first of which presents the issues involved. America has had thrust upon her the moral leadership of the world, and she cannot adequately resolve the many conflicts until there is a resolution of her own domestic conflict. She cannot rightly observe the conflicting issues in world affairs unless she clears her vision as she looks upon her own problem. The soundness of national life is involved. The zero hour has struck and time is running out. What is happening to the Negro himself? These are the issues, and I feel that they are adequately presented.

This section gives us the setting for the other sections in which are considered the areas of conflict, the resources, and the outlook. It will be impossible within the limits of this review to consider each of these sections. I feel that the very heart and core of the study is to be found in the one dealing with guiding principles, from which the book takes its title.

In this section Dr. George D. Kelsey states, "In its highest expression, the Christian ethic is not an ethic of race relations. It is an ethic of the individual and mankind, it is not an ethic of a nation, class, or race. It is the theory of the Christian life, which issues from the union of the soul with God. This life is thus absolutely individualistic. Individualism here means the purehearted surrender of oneself to God. It means the abandonment of the self to Christ, so that it is no longer the self which thinks, feels, speaks, or acts, but Christ. It means one's having the mind of Christ in him. Since the soul that is united with God is inspired by the will and spirit of God, it must actively realize the love of God toward all people—strangers and enemies as well as friends. All people are viewed as God views them. Thus absolute religious individualism is accompanied by an equally absolute universalism: a fellowship of love determined solely by the love of God."

We can readily see that there is no room here for the idea of superior races or nations. The approach to the problem of race in the light of this functional relationship with God implies a universal fellowship in which individuals are the important factors. When this is accepted, we do not have Chinese friends, white friends, or Negro friends, we have friends who happen to be Chinese, white, or Negro. The whole question of race and color caste stems from a failure to accept this basic principle. The world must learn to forget labels and the rather arbitrary classifications, and to see these individuals in the light of all their relationships. Even in our protests as we face the inequities in these several areas, this love and good will which are the normal expression of fellowship must determine our whole attitude and approach. We protest so that all may share and enjoy the opportunities and benefits of what we call the American democracy. It is not a protest in order to seek the advantage that the others have, in order to become the tyrant or the oppressor. It is a protest against the fundamental inequities in those areas resulting from our misconceptions and prejudices.

Men have rights, not because they are members of a privileged group, but because they are individuals and belong to a universal fellowship. When a man

who happens to be a Jew or a Catholic or a Negro is refused work opportunities for which he may have particular skills, it is not a sin against the Jew, Catholic, or Negro—it is a sin against humanity and God. It is a refusal to accept the universalism inherent in the Christian concept of man.

Individuals who are complacent and easygoing will have their consciences pricked by this book. Those who have become fainthearted because of the difficulties and apparent futility of their efforts to create Christian attitudes will find encouragement and hope.

These leaders speak with one voice because they are American and wish America to be strong enough to assume as a truly Christian nation the role to which she has fallen heir. They speak as leaders of the largest minority group in America. They know what it is to suffer. They know what it means to attempt to apply the principles of the Christian faith to the total experience of life despite oppositions and attempted frustrations. Here is a voice America needs to hear, and I feel that God is speaking to her mind and heart through these leaders. May she accept the challenge and walk with the Christ in dealing with her problem of race relations.

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**Conflict in Christology: a Study of British and American Christology, 1889-1914.** By JOHN STEWART LAWTON. London: S.P.C.K. House, 1947. pp. 331. 20s.

The doctrine of Christ has been avoided in Anglo-American theology for nearly a generation now. This shrewd and scholarly study by a young English theologian shows why this has occurred, and helps to create the perspective needed for a fresh start.

The period chosen for study is the period in which theological liberalism had its greatest influence, from *Lux Mundi* to the First World War. Conservative and liberal writers are both considered—on the American side, Strong and Shedd as well as W. N. Clarke and Borden P. Bowne; on the British side, Gore and Forsyth as well as R. J. Campbell and the Caird brothers. But it is shown how certain liberal assumptions steadily made their way into general acceptance and specifically affected the doctrine of the Person of Christ, which was “in the very forefront of discussion for much of the period” (p. viii). And it is shown how the unsatisfactory outcome of the liberal reconstruction of Christology finally led to a “divorce of theology from history” (Chap. 7) that has endured for many years.

The first two chapters analyze the liberal assumptions in terms of which the reconstruction was attempted: the inductive, historical method; the real humanity and psychological unity of Christ's person; the evolutionary development of nature and history, and the immanence of God in the whole cosmic process: the substitution of psychological and ethical for metaphysical categories in thinking of God and man. Particular importance is attached to the fact that Christ was regarded as *fully human* (with the ancient school of Antioch) but at the same time *one fully unified person* (as the school of Alexandria always insisted). The joining of these two formerly divided views, plus fresh historical perspective concerning the life of Christ, created an opportunity for a new Christology which “by its very breadth of comprehension might have dimmed the one-sided efforts of the ancients” (p. 39).

What actually happened, as the rest of the book painstakingly demonstrates, was not a successful reconstruction but a "collision and collapse." When closely conjoined, "the two axioms, unity and humanity, tended to heighten the tension between divinity and humanity a thousandfold" (p. 43). The given assumptions of liberalism made it impossible to pass from the human Jesus to the ever-living Son of God, or vice versa, except by minimizing the distinction of God and man, and so destroying the distinctive significance of the God-man. While the doctrine of the *Kenosis* postponed the crisis for a time, it eventually turned out that the idealistic, humanistic, subjectivistic assumptions of liberalism not only destroyed the old realistic Christology, but put nothing substantial in its place. A portrait of the historical Jesus took the place of the living presence of Christ—and then the eschatological school of New Testament critics discredited the portrait! Since then Anglo-American theology has circumvented the whole subject of Christology, and tried to base Christian faith in God and man on other than historical foundations.

Since two World Wars have now shaken the idealistic assumptions of the older type of liberalism, it may now be time to return to the abandoned task which Christian thought can never permanently abandon. This book may help materially in the work of reconstruction, by calling attention to the "magnificent foundations" (p. 39) and ruined superstructure left behind by the last previous builders.

British theology is naturally treated with a surer touch than American. It is odd to have no reference to William Adams Brown's *Outline*, when less influential theologians such as L. F. Stearns get considerable attention. But the main trend of Anglo-American theology is well defined here, and well distinguished from the more radical trend of German theology.

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**Christian Apologetics.** By ALAN RICHARDSON. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. pp. 256. \$3.00.

Altogether in keeping with the resurgence of theology is the appearance of this fresh and constructive treatment of one of its major branches. Carefully distinguishing his subject from apology, the defense of Christian truth, the Canon of Durham Cathedral defines apologetics as "the study of the ways and means of defending that truth." More precisely, it deals with "the implications of the Christian revelation for the rational understanding of the world and of our existence in it." Accordingly, the book discusses the meaning of revelation, particularly the Christian revelation, the validity of traditional arguments from miracle and prophecy, the inspiration and authority of the Bible, and the relation between faith and reason.

The standpoint is that of a critical Augustinianism. Richardson stresses both the empirical and the existential character of theology, the former because the data are those provided by the historical events centering in Christ and the concrete reality of a believing, worshiping, and witnessing church; the latter because the theologian is personally involved in the complex of relationships which he investigates. However, the author's central emphasis is the primacy of faith. Rationalism, which regards truth as discoverable through the operation of the unaided human reason, is decisively rejected in favor of the Augustinian dictum, "Believe to understand" (*crede ut intellegas*). Man's reason no less than his will has been cor-

rupted by sin; only when illuminated by faith elicited by the Christian revelation does it become truly rational.

The development of this thesis is not without ambiguity. Richardson comes dangerously close to the Barthian irrationalism which he elsewhere condemns when he says that "revelation, like the sun, must be seen by its own light." (Is there never need of inquiring whether the sunlight I think I see is illusory or real?) He defends a "supra-rational revelation" as against one attested by the "spiritual, rational and moral consciousness." (Is this opposition necessary?) He wavers between a view of faith as "always the gift of God," coming from "God's grace alone," and one which regards the *possibility* of faith as a divine gift, which man is free to accept or refuse.

In the main, however, the author's conception of the relation between faith and reason is a cogent interpretation of the actual facts. Confronting life and the universe, he contends, reason does not have within itself a principle of understanding which is self-evident or demonstrable to all rational beings. By an act of faith, then, man must select some judgment of significance, some "key-idea by which our fragmentary perceptions of truth can be integrated into a satisfying world-view." This faith-principle Christians find in the revelation of God in Christ, which gives reason the perspective from which it can think truthfully and attain a rational understanding of the world and its purpose.

So conceived, faith cannot oppose reason, but only other faiths, rival conditions of reason, such as the presuppositions of Marxism or scientific humanism. Indeed, reason may help to test the validity of faith: "The adequacy of any particular 'faith-principle' must be judged by its ability to order the whole range of *data* supplied by the empirical sciences (including theology) in a rational and coherent philosophy." Along with conscience and the aesthetic sense, reason also provides the necessary "point of connection" between man's soul and God's Word, and in this sense precedes faith. As Augustine put it, "We could not even believe if we had not rational souls."

For Richardson, God's revelatory activity underlies all true knowledge. Both general and special revelation are redemptive, the latter being the correction and transvaluation of the former. There is genuine revelation of God in non-Christian religions, yet the fullness of God's saving grace is found in Christ alone. The author emphatically repudiates the conception of revelation as a body of propositional truths contained in an infallible book; God discloses himself and his purposes rather than doctrines about himself. He accepts as valid the categories of modern scientific biblical criticism, affirming both the divine authority of the Bible and man's need to use his best faculties, Spirit-guided, in interpreting God's message recorded in the Bible.

At other points questions arise. For example, it is not clear that revelation must be attested by miracle, even as defined by Richardson. Again, the claims of mysticism and the "inner light" as ways to God are all too easily brushed aside.

As a whole, however, the book is a balanced and convincing treatment which avoids the aberrations of both man-centered liberalism and antirational neo-orthodoxy. Distinguished throughout by painstaking scholarship and illuminating insights, it merits close study by all who would understand aright the foundations of the Christian faith.

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**Civilization on Trial.** By ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE. New York: Oxford University Press, 1948. pp. vii-263. \$3.50.

Dr. Toynbee has here brought together ten essays which he has previously published in widely different periodicals and has added to them three others. The unifying outlook which binds them together is the author's approach as a historian "who sees the Universe and all that therein is . . . in irreversible movement through time-space." The aim common to the whole "is to gain some gleam of insight into the meaning of this mysterious spectacle. The governing idea is . . . that the universe becomes intelligible to the extent of our ability to apprehend it as a whole." Dr. Toynbee, too, is convinced that the story cannot be understood in terms of this world only, but is "one aspect of the life of the Kingdom of Heaven . . . So history passes over into theology."

The series of papers assembled under this common purpose exhibits the same erudition that characterizes the substantial volumes which have rightly brought the author such wide recognition. They are in thoroughly charming literary style. Through them the average reader may obtain Dr. Toynbee's thesis in even better fashion than in the familiar one-volume *A Study of History*. The opening essay, "My View of History," is a brief summary of what the author has covered more in detail in his massive tomes. In the final two essays, "Christianity and Civilization" and "The Meaning of History for the Soul," the author again reveals himself frankly as a Christian. The intervening essays are primarily efforts to seek an understanding of the present world situation from the perspective of history.

We sometimes forget that Dr. Toynbee is intensely interested in the current scene. As the editor of successive annual volumes on the international situation he is as familiar as any man now living with the record of the political and economic developments of the past few stirring decades. His dominant endeavor is to summon the knowledge of the past to enable man to act constructively in the present. As he makes clear in his third essay, he believes that history repeats itself. Here is a cyclical view, but of a kind different from that with which we are familiar in the historians of classical antiquity. He declares (p. 38) that "the repetitive element in history reveals itself as an instrument for freedom and creative action, and not as an indication that God and man are the slaves of fate." He does not believe that the decline and fall of civilizations is inevitable, or that our present Western civilization is, as so many fear, hopelessly moribund. Western civilization may, if it chooses, commit suicide. "But we are not doomed (p. 39) to make history repeat itself; it is open to us, through our own efforts, to give history, in our case, some new and unprecedented turn."

In a volume so packed with stimulating surveys and comments, it is difficult to single out two or three essays as of particular importance. However, no reader should miss the chapter on "The Dwarfing of Europe," in which a now familiar feature of the modern world is presented as thoughtfully and as cogently as it is anywhere to be found. So, too, "Russia's Byzantine Heritage" puts clearly what is becoming familiar to specialists, the fashion in which the allegedly Communist Russia of our day is continuing many of the patterns and attitudes which the Russia of the Czars inherited from the Byzantine Empire.

To readers of this journal the most fascinating sections will be those in which the author specifically deals with religion. Dr. Toynbee holds that religion is

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more significant than the passing succession of civilizations. He is confident that Christianity will not only endure but grow, and that if Western civilization passes the way of its predecessors, Christianity will increase "in wisdom and stature as the result of a fresh experience of secular catastrophe" (p. 239). Obviously he believes in progress, progress toward the doing of God's will on earth as it is in heaven. Yet he does not believe that ever on earth will the church be a perfect embodiment of the Kingdom of Heaven (p. 244). To Dr. Toynbee the kind of progress seen in history makes for a "cumulative increase in the means of Grace at the disposal of each soul in this world." This view does not regard this world as "a spiritual exercise ground beyond the Kingdom of God," but "a province of the Kingdom . . . one in which spiritual action could and would be . . . the one thing of manifest and abiding value in a world in which all other things are vanity" (p. 265).

Learned and Christian though Dr. Toynbee is, I find myself wondering whether, with all of his familiarity with the past and with the current world scene, he is really cognizant of the enormous spread of Christianity in the past century and a half, and of the present Ecumenical Movement. In this phase of history (as on pp. 85, 86) he seems to be unaware of what is actually happening. Familiarity with it would give support to his optimism and lead him to a deeper understanding of the fashion in which the gospel works in the world.

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**The Kingship of Christ.** By W. A. VISSER 't HOOFT. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. pp. 158. Price not given.

The subtitle of this volume is "An Interpretation of Recent European Theology." The material was presented as the Stone Lectures for 1947 at Princeton Theological Seminary. The best traditions of that honorable foundation are fully maintained by the present lectures.

The author is careful to point out that what he is offering is an interpretation, not simply a resumé. Few men are better qualified than he for the task. During these recent crucial years, Dr. Visser 't Hooft, an ecumenical Christian in the truest sense, has been constructively active at the vital center of church life in Europe. He has been not a mere spectator of a life-and-death struggle, but a wise and trusted participant in it.

At the same time, he has kept his critical judgment. He is neither cheaply optimistic nor woefully pessimistic. He has maintained sufficient detachment of mind to apprehend the significance of what has been taking place in the church he knows so well. Although his duties as "a servant of the World Council of Churches," as he rightfully describes himself, have been exacting enough, it is more than evident that he has found time to keep abreast of Continental theological thought. He is, indeed, a theologian in his own right. He is familiar with the new currents which have begun to run here and there in the church in Germany, Holland, France, Belgium, Norway and Sweden, Russia, and everywhere he demonstrates his competence to appraise them. It is clear that he knows whereof he writes. On the whole, he allows himself what may be described as "cautious hope," based partly, one surmises, on his own indomitable Christian faith, but partly on the concrete evidence, assembled and evaluated in these pages, that the church in Europe

is far from having been disintegrated by its recent bitter experiences, but is instead becoming possessed of a new sense of its redemptive mission.

Dr. Visser 't Hooft fully recognizes what is traditionally known as the three-fold office of Christ, namely, that of prophet, priest, and king, but it is the kingship with which he is especially concerned. Not, however, with the kingship in isolation. The Christ who sits at the right hand of God, who therefore shares the throne of God, to whom has been given all power in both heaven and earth, and whose rule must continue until all alien powers shall have been put under his feet—this kingly Christ is no less the prophetic Word of God and no less the self-giving Sacrifice for the sins of the world. But the kingly office is not a simple derivative of the prophetic and the priestly. Christ can speak authoritatively and act redeemingly because of the royal prerogatives which are already his, and which are still intrinsically his even though none listen to his word and none accept his grace.

Much of the weakness of historical Protestantism is declared to lie in the tendency to exalt the prophetic and the priestly at the expense of the kingly. Romanism has exalted the kingship of Christ, but has missed the true conception by usurping to itself the kingly rights. If Christ is Lord, he never can be equated with that of which he is Lord. The church can never be more than a means: it must witness to a power that is always above itself.

No interpretation of Christ the prophet, such as characterized Protestant liberalism and more recently Protestant philanthropism, and no interpretation of Christ the priest such as characterized the confessional and liturgical churches, can therefore be adequate so long as it proceeds without reference to the absolute primacy of Christ the king, and his right to rule all the life of the world equally with the life of the church.

Dr. Visser 't Hooft sets himself to expound the vast implications of this overwhelming conception. He dwells on its biblical centrality. He illustrates its widespread historical neglect—a neglect which has borne such devastating consequences. He shows what it would mean for the church if the conception and the faith it involves should be seriously accepted. But he shows also what it would mean for the world itself, since the implicate of the kingship of Christ is a universal lordship. To confess that Christ is Lord is to confess that all things—"all rule, all authority, all power"—are rightfully his. How to implement this conception is admittedly the great problem confronting the modern church, but the one certain thing is that it can never be implemented by means which are alien to the spirit and purpose of the kingship.

In all this we have more than the personal opinion of the lecturer. The resurgence of the conception of the kingship of Christ is not limited to the mind of Dr. Visser 't Hooft. The very significance of the book is in the wide documentation it presents in support of the claim that this epochal resurgence is manifesting itself in the life, the thought, the pronouncements, and the activities of the modern Continental churches.

Not that there are no contrary tendencies. The danger of a return to individualism, to pietism, to futuristic eschatology, to worldly compromise, and the like, is fully recognized. The Lutheran tradition that too sharply contrasted the churchly sphere and the worldly sphere, the Calvinistic tradition of common grace, and the Roman tradition that would identify the hierarchical church with the kingdom of Christ—these are still strong. Every one of them must be modified if the true

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biblical doctrine of the kingship is to be apprehended and applied. It is a doctrine radical and revolutionary, uncompromisingly exacting in its demand, and yet withal a doctrine full of promise and assurance since its sufficient *dynamis* lies in its very acceptance. The needful staith is born of the creative faith.

There are many who will not like this little book. It cuts across many of the presuppositions of the mere biblicist, the mere adventist, the mere individualist, the mere humanitarian, the mere religionist. It calls for a profound rethinking of the nature and mission of the church, as the logic of a drastic change in the common Christian attitude toward Christ himself. Nevertheless, as one reads the book and considers its testimony, one is constrained to ask, "If this is not it, then what is?"

EDWIN LEWIS

Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey.

**Hitler in Our Selves.** By MAX PICARD. Hinsdale, Illinois: Henry Regnery Co., 1947. pp. 272. \$3.50.

**Our Threatened Values.** By VICTOR GOLLANCZ. Hinsdale, Illinois: Henry Regnery Co., 1947. pp. 218. \$2.50.

There is a growing concern over the malady of our times, and a growing suspicion that the fault is within ourselves, not entirely in the outer environment. These two books are among those which offer a religious and moral diagnosis of our soul-sickness. One deals with Hitler and Nazism as the focal area of the disease of "disjointedness." The other book, by an English Socialist and publisher, is more concerned with the way the victors of the war have become infected with indifference to human values until we threaten the very values we have fought to save.

Max Picard, a Swiss physician and philosophical writer, sets forth in dramatic generalizations his theory that modern man, especially the Germans, have repudiated continuity with past and future and coherence in an organic world; we have abandoned God's world for our own world of chaos. We live in the moment only, he asserts, snatching mechanically the next thing and the next, while the previous act slides out of memory. The things we do have no context, no relatedness with a larger whole, no place in an orderly hierarchy of values. A Nazi could turn from murder to Mozart with no feeling of incongruity. Having forgotten how to grow into an organic and historical whole, the Nazi state could only expand in space by swallowing more and more territory without plan or limit. Dr. Picard also finds symptoms of this disease in the hodge-podge of programs on the radio, and in our tendency to seize some aspect of reality such as "race" or "sex" and absolutize it into the Basis of Everything. On the physical level, the modern disease is cancer, a perfect analogue of planless, destructive expansiveness.

Dr. Picard considers it an act of Providence that the disease of modern man came to a head in the sore spot of Germany, so that the rest of mankind could become aroused to the danger. It is on God's intercession that he principally relies for the salvation of Germany, but he also suggests that the occupying Powers set Germany an example of goodness, and that Germans could learn to build up an organic community better in small states than in a large state.

Dr. Picard has much shrewd insight into modern man. One can think of

many symptoms supporting his diagnosis, such as the substitution of miscellaneous quiz-program knowledge for systematic learning, or the delusion that fifty chorus girls are prettier than one. It is a pity that this insight is clothed in such sweeping language. One who is constitutionally chary of oversimplification may wonder if Dr. Picard is not falling into the modern sin of "absolutizing" his insight. He is certainly on dangerous ground when he subsumes a great variety of human beings under the one abstracted attribute of "the German."

Victor Gollancz's book, with its concrete common sense, is an excellent supplement to Dr. Picard's thought. One feels that Mr. Gollancz never forgets that he is dealing with individual human beings. His concern is with the basic moral imperative of respect for human personality, which he thinks we are in danger of betraying. A devout man, he writes in terms acceptable to Christians, his fellow Jews, and humanists, without compromising his own religious faith. He condemns the shamefaced deprecation of any motive but national self-interest in Germany's reconstruction. He points an accusing finger at the many comfortable people who from their own security ask indignantly why the Germans did not have the courage to revolt against Hitler. He sees in the victor nations signs of the fascist sins of fear of free speech, untruthful boasting by governments, nationalism, barbaric *ex post facto* justice, and worst of all, injustice in dealing with the vanquished—a repetition of the Nazi pattern of despoiled territory, forced migrations, and starvation diet. For all this indictment he cites chapter and verse: yet unlike less level-headed prophets he avoids the pitfall of painting ourselves as worse than the Nazis.

Communism, Mr. Gollancz believes, is next to Nazism the worst threat to our values. Unlike Nazism, it originally was based on a humanitarian aim, but was corrupted when the means—the one successful socialist State—became confused with the end, and human welfare and honesty became secondary to the success of Russia and the Communist élite. Our sole defense against either Communism or the revival of Nazism is the demonstration of our moral values in our actions, in a spirit of tolerance and friendliness. We must do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly through this devastated world.

Some readers may dissent from Mr. Gollancz on minor points of international law or economics, but his vigorous yet reasonable moral indictment should trouble consciences everywhere. Though addressed to Englishmen, this book should come home to Americans the more readily, perhaps, because Mr. Gollancz refrains from assessing America's guilt.

CAROL R. MURPHY

Jerden's Lane, Rockport, Massachusetts.

**Pascal and Kierkegaard: A Study in the Strategy of Evangelism.** By DENZIL G. M. PATRICK. London: The Lutterworth Press, 1947. Vol. I, pp. xvi-233. 15s. Vol II, pp. xvii-412. 25s.

It was with some skepticism that I began the reading of these two volumes. Pascal and Kierkegaard merit all the attention they are getting, but can their thought be construed in terms of a "strategy of evangelism"? That question is answered quite convincingly in the closing part of the second volume. All of the first volume and a large part of the second are devoted to a biographical study of each man, a rather extensive interpretation of the times in which they

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lived and thought, and a survey of their writings. Then, in less than one hundred pages, the thesis is presented that the central emphases in their books point toward the evangelistic and missionary strategy that the church needs in our day. The author's interest is understandable and his skill in the use of sources is obvious. He was a Theological Secretary of the British Student Christian Movement, a World's Student Christian Federation Secretary, a Secretary of the World's Alliance of Y.M.C.A.'s, and a collaborator of the World Council of Churches. At the time of his death in 1944, at the early age of thirty-seven, he was minister of the American Church in Geneva.

Recognizing their differences (one was a Roman Catholic while the other was a Lutheran, one was a man of science while the other was essentially a poet and philosopher), the author shows that Pascal and Kierkegaard had much in common. Both struck at the roots of the Renaissance tradition "with its enthronement of self-sufficient reason, its affirmation that man is the measure of all things. Both preached a vital message through their writings, yet remained laymen. Both suffered much and died young: Pascal at thirty-nine, and Kierkegaard at forty-two. Both based their thought upon the message of the Bible. Both "sought above all things to lead men back to the perfect simplicity of unbounded faith in God and unconditional obedience to His Word." Both stressed the greatness and the misery of man, and sought to disillusion man and bring him back into living contact with God. Both magnified the importance of the individual, and of decision, the choice of the Christian faith. They saw the weaknesses of the church and the clergy of their times and pointed the way to the recovery of vitality and true authority, which is the way of the cross of Jesus Christ, "the supreme reality." This is the proper context for Christian apologetics and the right approach to evangelism. And they must be wrought out together if either is to be adequate.

Dr. Patrick's work will prove of lasting value. It may not be read widely but it will be studied carefully by serious students of Pascal and Kierkegaard. For many—especially those who are not already familiar with the thoughts of these men—it may prove helpful to read the last one hundred pages first. All who have a deep interest in evangelism, whether ministers or laymen, should accept the discipline of a careful study of both volumes. They will derive from it the corrective for much that is superficial in the preaching of our day, and a clearer understanding of the profound reaches of the truth that reveals God and redeems man.

HAROLD W. TRIBBLE

President, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Massachusetts.

Paul. By EDGAR J. GOODSPEED. Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1947. pp. 246. \$2.75.

Professor Goodspeed, the creative scholar, has here issued another of his popular volumes replete with rich and varied learning. The book is written in a clear, smooth style that flows like cool milk over a parched tongue on a heated day. It pictures Paul the man, his career and letters, in a unified, intriguing narrative. The reader gets in a fashion most admirable the story, person and thought of Paul quickly, easily, and without becoming entangled in confusing problems.

There is a one-page introduction; Paul's story according to *The Acts*, with a summary of his letters inserted in their proper places in the three journeys; a chapter

summarizing the author's well-known theory of the assembling of the letters; a table of dates, sixteen pages of notes explaining his position on critical questions, a bibliography of thirteen books on Paul, and an index. The end papers contain the map of Paul's journeys, and the book is beautifully printed.

Into the flow of the story Professor Goodspeed has woven illuminating details of history, customs, travel, great personalities, the cities Paul evangelized, and the backgrounds of the problems and crises Paul experienced. This has been done so skillfully that the reader may fail to realize the vast amount of treasure packed neatly and closely into these chapters. Every page is a mine of close-knit knowledge of indispensable worth.

Readers familiar with what has been called a "castrated Paul" in recent books, some of them by Professor Goodspeed's own students, are in for a surprise. Here Professor Goodspeed goes back to the old-fashioned, classical scheme of basing everything on the Acts story. He defends its Lucan authorship and general scheme, and as far as any informed scholar can, uses the material at face value, *in toto*. Contrary to the frequent scuttling of the Acts story, Professor Goodspeed makes the incidents of Acts exclaim, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here!" This enables him, for example, to unite the Jerusalem council account as given in both Acts 15 and Galatians 2, without disparaging either or trying to harmonize them into a shotgun wedding of perfect unity. His more radical conclusions appear in the closing chapter, where he discusses the later New Testament epistles as affected by the Pauline letter-collection.

It is doubtful if a reviewer's criticisms matter much. Certainly this author already has weighed them, and has his answers. One can differ on whether Galatians should be dated between the first and second journeys, or be put elsewhere, but so what? The fact that summarizing the letters as one goes along—which is brilliantly done—gives little opportunity to set forth unsearchable riches of Paul's mind, and none at all in summarizing his gospel, is a secondary matter. This is a most severe lack, but one inherent in the general plan of the book, and could not be avoided. The reader gets little opportunity of checking on Professor Goodspeed's interweaving of the Acts with the Epistles, but he is not likely to want to anyway. To call Paul's mind "democratic" is a prochronism. Far better is Paul's own word, "We have the mind of Christ." A table of the New Testament letters with dates, along with the Pauline date table, would have aided in reference and understanding.

Professor Goodspeed falls into the common sin of all scholars. He asserts as fact what can only be surmised. For example, he declares flatly that Paul suffered from recurrent malaria. Possibly so. But we do *not* know. He defends certain critical conclusions with the usual "Paul would have written," etc. Nobody can know what Paul may have thought, or having thought, considered appropriate or unnecessary. Professor Goodspeed elaborates his well-known theory of the Pauline letter-collection and the staggering results accruing therefrom as established facts. There are many who are still a long, long way from being convinced. Theories and surmises, however plausible and helpful, should never be set down as facts.

The vast horde of readers who just will not read the New Testament, can get here authoritatively and constructively the career of Paul, fascinatingly presented. Here also is an antidote to those widely read tomes that present a vivid but spurious Paul. Here Paul is presented with historical and Christian validity. Let me bear witness: Having recently published such a book on Paul, though fol-

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lowing a radically different plan, I have read this beginner's book with high relish and great profit. So may you.

CHESTER WARREN QUIMBY

Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa.

**The Witness of the Prophets.** By GORDON PRATT BAKER. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948. pp. 213. \$2.25.

This is a new and stimulating book, and its value is not lessened by the fact that some readers will not agree with its conclusions. It is a good thing to have a provocative challenge to certain ideas which are prominent in contemporary theological thinking, as well as a reinforcement of other ideas which are less controversial.

The book includes both less and more than its title indicates: less, because it is rather the witness of some of the prophets than of their entire fellowship; more, because a little over a third of the book deals in three chapters not with the prophets of the Old Testament, but with Jesus the Heir of the Prophets, the Prince of the Prophets, and the Hope of the Prophets. Mr. Baker does not deal at all with some of the less important of the prophets—such, for example, as Joel and Obadiah—and this is not an omission of much consequence. But also he omits any discussion of Ezekiel and Micah. And most singularly, although he has a chapter on the great Isaiah of King Hezekiah's time, he ignores, except for two incidental references in other chapters, the immensely important message of Second Isaiah. One would hardly know from the book that the great prophecies beginning with the fortieth chapter of the Book of Isaiah existed.

Perhaps there was a reason which influenced Mr. Baker in his selections and omissions. He is developing the theme of moral judgment, and at the end of the book he has an exceptionally grave and weighty exposition of the conviction that instead of universal salvation, there must be an ultimate doom for those who have deliberately and persistently refused the forgiving grace of God. "Sanctity of purpose cannot be restored to a life which is no longer capable of recognizing holiness. Nor can God condone such blindness without condemning his own righteousness. . . . It is the inflexible force of holy love, therefore, which makes inevitable the reality of Hell." This is one of the conclusions of the book which will provoke contrary opinions. The other, in the same last chapter, is Mr. Baker's argument for the closeness of Jesus to our own human nature and for the divine potentialities of this nature as it is. Here he runs counter to a strong tendency of contemporary theology to make God something "wholly other" than man, and in his argument here (so it seems to the present reviewer) he throws a wholesome counterweight into the scales of present thought.

There is a defect in the book which one may be permitted to hope will not recur in subsequent books by an author who is possessed, as Mr. Baker is, of information, insight, and imagination. He can write, and often does write, with clear and pungent sentences, but sometimes he runs the danger of being like a certain congressman of whom it was said in a "Profile" in the *New Yorker* that "He never used one word if two would do as well." Particularly in descriptions Mr. Baker often lets his fancy run riot and his vocabulary breaks loose into a spate of words. The austere simplicity of the Old Testament is turned into melodramatic exaggeration. For example, he asserts that when Hosea first married Gomer, "There was

to be a home, modest to be sure, but adequate to the needs of two people in love. And there would be children whose laughter should make toy-strewn rooms to ring with haunting melodies which time could never dull." Whereas, after Gomer's infidelity, "No one will ever know his numberless nights of tossing, tiring sleep, filled with dreams of sly, furtive faces forever sneering at him," from which sleep he would have "startled awakening, with cold sweat beading his forehead and chilling his spine."

That kind of writing might make a reader suppose that the book is more rhetoric than reality—but such an impression would be unjust. Pruned of some of its ornateness and exuberance, there remains in the book a living tree from which one can gather substantial fruit.

WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE

Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

**The Bible in the Church: A Short History of Interpretation.** By ROBERT M. GRANT. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948. pp. 194. \$2.50.

Dr. Robert Grant's small volume adds luster to a name already well and favorably known among biblical and especially New Testament scholars and a wide public. His fourteen short chapters on the interpretation of the Bible are interesting, scholarly, and well arranged. He has written lucidly and succinctly. His treatment of the multitude of interpreters, from Jesus and Paul down to Karl Barth and Joachim Wach, is admirably balanced as between those who have been highly influential and those of lesser importance. Illustrations and quotations are well chosen. The treatment is historically and theologically objective, so much so that one does not immediately discover the author's leaning toward neo-orthodoxy.

There are few omissions. As Dr. Grant shows, the contribution of Jewish scholarship to the Christian understanding of the Old Testament has been great—in the early centuries, during the Renaissance, and again in modern times. But much rabbinic interpretation does not stand high in any respect, and its evil effects should be noted as especially conspicuous in Paul, who served his own day well but, in this respect, is far from a model for later Bible readers. Basic to all interpretation are the interpreter's conceptions of inspiration and revelation, which perhaps need closer definition.

Missing are some great names in the modern history of interpretation: B. H. Streeter, Adolf Deissmann, and S. J. Case, for example. Moreover, Deissmann has discovered in the papyri that the "unintelligible . . . word in the Lord's Prayer, which we translate 'daily'" (p. 172), actually means "daily ration." One small typographical error has probably already been discovered, in a sentence (p. 132) where "eternal," not "external," ideas are contrasted with temporary forms.

Certain statements are hardly acceptable as they stand. One cannot agree that "neo-orthodoxy has revitalized modern Protestant theology and biblical interpretation" (p. 161). Rather, it has merely administered the sparkling cup of dogmatic assertiveness, a heady drink which releases from the inhibitions of factual, scientific exegesis. It is not clear whether Dr. Grant approves Torm's dangerous assertion that "prophetic utterances could have a deeper meaning than the prophet knew" (p. 164). Such a principle allows the interpreter, Karl Barth for example, to claim, or seem to claim, prophetic authority for his own dogmatism.

Dr. Grant is fully justified in pointing out the errors into which scientific, historical exegesis has fallen. Strauss and Baur were unhistorical, unscientific

philosophical dogmatists, just as the notorious Beck of Tübingen was a theological dogmatist. Spiritual exegesis and theological exegesis are both dangerous, for they tend to forget that even if, with Bultmann, the existential situations of the ancient and the modern are much the same, the forms of expression are so notably different that only a thoroughly nontheological, historical exegesis can serve to prevent fundamental misunderstanding. This scientific exegesis, which uses all of the techniques of the philologist, the literary critic, and the historian, must be followed by a practical application to the modern "existential" situation; and this involves that species of historical imagination, or divination, which Dilthey called empathy. It is far from being the "spiritual" or "pneumatic" exegesis which opposed F. C. Baur and arose again on the Continent out of the confused thought produced by the First World War. As to theological exegesis, it must be remembered that the books of the Bible were books of religion, not of theology, and that they are valuable today because they met the needs of the seeker after God, not after theology.

With Dr. Grant's final summary of his own conception of interpretation one can fully concur. He states well the values of historical interpretation. He objects to the "modernization" of the Bible, to *eisegesis* masquerading as *exegesis*. He demands continuous, fresh "philological-historical research" as the only basis for progress in interpretation. His strictures upon the self-confidence of much nineteenth-century interpretation are fully justified. He rightly insists that criticism must always end in a positive, appreciative interpretation which discovers the religious values of the Bible. And with this emphasis one can wholeheartedly agree.

C. C. McCOWN

Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California.

**Protestant Church Building.** By WILLIAM H. LEACH. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948. pp. 188. \$3.00.

Between the covers of this attractive book (188 pages) you will find much to guide you in beginning and successfully completing what you have been dreaming of—that new church-building project.

Protestantism is building today! In every city, town, hamlet, and in the open country, thousands of churches are soon to be erected; many thousands more are dreamed of and planned. Will they be built intelligently, helpfully, serviceably? Will they be a lasting joy? Will both the planning and the financing be adequate?

Mistakes in building are costly and should be avoided. Here is a book that gives real help at this point. Pastors and congregations who face the need of a new church, or remodeling, are here given specific steps by which these tasks can be undertaken and accomplished. Here are principles in selecting a lot, choosing an architect, selecting committees, making needed decisions, directing the financial campaign. The essentials of these processes are carefully analyzed. Yes, costly mistakes will be avoided if these principles are studied and the suggestions applied or adapted to local situations.

Speaking of finances, these two sentences stood out: "It is hard to get the necessary cash. But remember this: No matter how difficult it may be to borrow money, it is always more difficult to pay it back."

"The primary purpose of building a church," says Dr. Leach, "is to enable men and women to approach God. No matter what social or educational facilities the building offers, if it fails as a stimulus to prayer, it has failed in its purpose. The achievement of a building of worship involves the aspiration of religion and the



techniques of many arts and trades. It is not alone the matter of the worship center or the chancel; the entire building, exterior and interior, should share in the message."

With this statement of purpose for Part II, the author discusses various aspects of church architecture, chancel arrangements, furnishings, organs, and windows. Many terms that you need to know are identified and defined. This shows research and is very interestingly portrayed; illustrations abound that are helpful, indeed inspirational.

There are chapters, too, on building for education, fellowship and administration; and other chapters on electronics, amplification, lighting, heating, cooling, and air conditioning.

The book is easy to read. Relationships of church officials, committees, architects and contractors are outlined. If you are planning to build, by all means get this book and study it carefully, for it will help you.

H. L. JOHNS

District Superintendent, The Methodist Church, New Orleans, Louisiana.

**A Hundred Years of China Methodism.** By WALTER N. LACY. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948. pp. 336. \$3.50.

Walter N. Lacy's over-all picture of the development of Methodist missions in China through a hundred years is enough to convince even the skeptic of the value of foreign missions.

From the first stirrings of missionary interest in the Church in America to the present-day Church in China, gaining in self-support and self-sufficiency, sending out its own missionaries, lifting its head and looking forward in spite of the hazards of revolutions, bandits, the Boxer Rebellion, Japanese invasions, and surges of antiforeignism—this is a moving panorama of the accomplishments of Christianity in a non-Christian land through evangelism, medical service, education, and personal example and testimony.

Mr. Lacy states in his foreword that this is not a "factual compendium," but that he has selected "the typical in order to give an impression of the general movement." It is natural that one whose chief contacts have been with the Methodist Episcopal Church should emphasize events connected with that branch of what is now a united Church. He relates in historical detail the arrival of Methodist missionaries in China, and their struggle to lay a foundation for the faith for which many were to sacrifice even their lives. Then, slowly, stations are founded, schools are organized, clinics open their doors, and the "Good News" spreads. A publishing house and presses turn out literature, music, hymnals. American church procedures are integrated into Chinese life and custom. And through each new path the gospel speeds on. These illustrations all picture the gratifying growth of the Christian religion in China. Many outstanding men and women today bear witness to the faith of their fathers and their grandfathers, and demonstrate the ability of the Chinese to take the lead in the forward movement of Christianity, and to carry on and widen the work at home and abroad. It is significant that even before unification in these United States, Methodisms in China had begun the unification and correlation of their programs.

This book might be called an aeroplane view of a century of Methodism, with occasional winging down to see the detail in particular situations and localities.

It is a painstaking and stimulating account of a movement vibrant with surging purpose and life, and should lead students of China to delve further into the vast store of heroic incident and glorious triumph which fill the tale of Methodism in the great Republic of the East.

ELEANOR L. WELCH

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150 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

**Psychology for Pastor and People.** By JOHN SUTHERLAND BONNELL. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. pp. xii-225. \$2.50.

It is with enthusiasm that I recommend, to pastors and laymen alike, *Psychology for Pastor and People*. Given originally as the James Sprunt Lectures at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, they are bound to draw an ever-widening audience of readers because of their practical and helpful character.

Every effective pastor is called upon constantly to counsel with people in trouble. Dr. Bonnell warns that no wise pastor will attempt to diagnose mental or physical ills. That clearly is work for the thoroughly trained psychiatrist or doctor of medicine. But the pastor will work with these men and they with him because, as a physician of the soul, he should be able to accomplish what they usually cannot.

The chapter, "The Art of Listening," will stop many a too talkative pastor dead in his tracks and set him on the road to doing a lot more listening than he has done in the past. Likewise the chapter, "The Technique of Asking Questions," is worth the price of the book. He portrays Jesus, through the 113 questions that he asked, as being one of the most skilled counselors who ever lived. A number of illustrations from Dr. Bonnell's own experience graphically portray the manner in which a trained asker of questions may lead a troubled soul to diagnose his own case and arrive at his own conclusions on what is wrong.

Then again, if any pastor can read the discussion on "The Problems of Childhood and Youth" without being challenged to preach one of the most helpful sermons of his life on that very subject, I should like to meet him and advise him to get into some other profession. And if perchance some brother has grown carelessly professional in his ministrations in the sickroom, what Bonnell has to tell him will stab him broad awake and cause him to make a brand-new beginning.

This chapter on "Ministering to the Sick" is of especial value. With an air of absolute confidence and authority, a minister should have at his tongue's end a good stock of pertinent Bible verses to give to those who find it difficult to sleep during their illness. With the sick wife who was so worried about her husband's business that she could not sleep, Dr. Bonnell talked quietly about the problem and then said, "I have exactly the spiritual help you need: 'I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety.'" He explained that the writer of the fourth Psalm was passing through a time of stress and strain similar to hers, but that by leaving the whole matter in God's hands the psalmist found refreshing slumber. The patient repeated the verse slowly and meaningfully a few times and dropped off into a sound, healing sleep.

I thought I was doing a tolerably good job of counseling before I read this book, but I shall surely do a much better one from here on out.

LEWIS L. DUNNINGTON

The First Methodist Church, Iowa City, Iowa.

**Just and Durable Parents.** By JAMES LEE ELLENWOOD. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948. pp. 224. \$2.50.

Here is a book that takes the sting out of our parental shortcomings and yet points out in a very penetrating way the few things that really matter in the business of belonging to a family. There is not a vague generality to be found in the whole of the twelve chapters. Grandfather Ellenwood writes for the most part about experiences, mistakes, and achievements of his own four-generation household. As we read the book we forget about the superficial differences between his family and ours and say with amazement and delight, "Listen, he is writing about us." Again and again we laugh about the Ellenwood foibles, and as we do we relax a bit in our concern about the imperfections of the Winfield family. We follow easily and eagerly the one, two, three, four, five principles or suggestions that the writer lists from time to time. In these lists we have a clear-cut way to check and evaluate our own procedures as parents, grandparents, or children.

I shall remember many of Mr. Ellenwood's interesting anecdotes and several of his significant conclusions, but I shall particularly remember some last lines in his first chapter. ". . . I am not saying that diets and clothing and social habits and good manners and education are not important. We should go ahead and fuss and stew and worry about them. But at fifty-six another important matter also looms up. Have we handled all these things in such a way that we are still just and durable parents? Has the total effect resulted in a continuing friendship with promise for the future? . . . what does it profit parents if they make their children eat their exact quotas of green vegetables, and come home at one, and always do as they are told—and thus gaining the upper hand, lose their friendship and confidence?"

Delightfully realistic pen sketches by Gertrude Howe make *Just and Durable Parents* a charming book.

LOUISE PARKS WINFIELD

Mamaroneck, New York.

**The Lost Gospel.** By ROBERT E. LUCCOCK. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. pp. viii-184. \$1.75.

This is an unusual and exciting book of sermons by a preacher who has a thorough grasp of the technique of preaching and an instinctive feeling for the dramatic in literature. This is a rare combination. Some solid preachers never make constructive use of the homiletic power to be derived from fiction, simply because they cannot sense the value of it. Other aspiring preachers, possessed of a keen enthusiasm for reading novels, become storytellers and little more, because they never learn the disciplines of persuasive preaching. But in the hands of Robert Luccock a text like Luke 19:42 is fused with a great story like Edgar Allan Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum" to produce a sermon entitled "The Swinging Sword"; and it must have been a sobered, inspired congregation that left the church the morning that sermon was preached!

Here are sixteen sermons, most of them based on short stories; and if any reader of this review dismisses the book upon the basis of that simple description, he will miss one of the most creative collections of sermons published in some time. The author believes that the short story is peculiarly well suited to preaching because of its terse, chiseled effects and highly dramatic presentation. None

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of the stories employed in these sermons is overfamiliar; hence they have the persuasive power of old ideas in new contexts. I enjoyed most the sermons based on Stephen Vincent Benet's "The Bishop's Beggar," Frank Luther Mott's "The Man With the Good Face," Eleanor Atkinson's "Johnny Appleseed"—the latter a novel, to be sure, but so beautifully suggestive of seedtime and harvest that it fairly shouts to be preached upon.

And I do want to stress my point that the use of stories in these sermons does not provide an evasion of the preacher's task as preacher—namely, the task of finding great spiritual ideas, and then casting them into a form of presentation that is clear and persuasive. Luccock does not evade that responsibility but meets it squarely in every sermon, with results that are a delight to the honest student of preaching—and a source of peril to the plagiarist!

EUGENE M. AUSTIN

Minister, Baptist Temple, Charleston, West Virginia.

**Have This Mind.** By Gerald Kennedy. Harper. \$2.00. A book of sermons by "one of the strong voices in the Protestant Church in our day." "I write under the conviction that Christianity has the only answer to the contemporary crisis. But I have the conviction also, that too many of us will never be the answer to anything until we commit ourselves to Jesus Christ as the truth."

—F. D. Maurice and his message for today.

**The Jesus of the Parables.** By Charles W. F. Smith. Westminster. \$3.00. It is supposed that "the parables are the most easily understood of all Jesus' teaching. . . . They have thus become familiar illustrations of commonplace moralities." But in them "Jesus appears as no Eastern sage or objective moralist, but as the Initiator of God's new age and the Agent of his purpose."

**Teaching the World to Read.** By Frank C. Laubach. Friendship Press. \$2.00. A handbook for literacy campaigns based on "study of literacy methods used in China and Russia and out of his own unparalleled experience in teaching illiterates . . . in ninety language areas on four continents."

**Pax Christi: The Peace of Christ.** By Albert D. Belden. Brethren Publishing House, Elgin, Ill. (n.p.) A program for a peace crusade throughout Christendom today, by a Congregational minister of London. Says Buell Gallagher: "The utopians of today are those who fatuously believe that the world can survive an atomic war. In this perspective, *Pax Christi* becomes the soundest common sense."

**The Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets.** By John Paterson. Scribners. \$3.00. A vital and readable book of "studies historical, religious, and expository in the Hebrew prophets" by the Scottish professor of Old Testament at Drew Theological Seminary.

**Prayer and You.** By Helen Smith Shoemaker. Revell. \$1.75. "Helen Shoemaker herself embodies the theme of the book. . . . This book will quicken those who come in contact with it—and quicken where it counts. For to pray or not to pray is to be or not to be." —E. Stanley Jones.

**Witness to the Light.** By Alec R. Vidler. Scribners. \$3.00. "The first thorough appraisal of the thought of the greatest theologian the Church of England produced in the nineteenth century"

**Two Giants and One World.** By A. William Loos. Friendship Press. \$.50 (pap.). Published for the Church Peace Union. A readable discussion of Soviet-American relations, with questions and suggestions for further study; completed after careful reading and criticism by various authorities and experts on Soviet Russia.

**The Shrine of a People's Soul.** By Edwin W. Smith. Friendship Press. \$1.50 (cl.), \$1.00 (pap.). A fascinating account of the missionary translators who have reduced tribal languages to writing and translated the Bible into remote dialects. The author himself did this in Northern Rhodesia.

**Dauntless Women.** By Winifred Mathews. Friendship Press. \$1.50 (cl.), \$1.00 (pap.). The story of seven pioneering women, recreated from their diaries, who stood beside their missionary husbands with victorious faith.

**What Shall I Preach?** By George Brown Thomas. Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$2.50. An arrangement of 2,200 significant Bible texts with suggestive sermon topics, with an extensive index. A real aid to the busy minister.

**The Sovereign Emblem.** By Ernest Wall. Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$1.25. The meaning of the Cross, and the Lord's Supper as a demonstration of that meaning.

**The Jew of Tarsus.** By Hugh J. Schonfield. Macmillan. \$2.50. "An unorthodox portrait of Paul." "The author's Jewish upbringing helps him to understand many things about Paul that Gentiles quite miss. At the same time he has an appreciation of Paul that is rare among Jews."

**The Negro Looks Into the South.** By Edward Gholson. Chapman & Grimes, Boston. \$1.25. An experienced Negro minister "on the life of the

Negro in the South, his handicaps, opportunities, possibilities . . . and the South's attitude toward the Negro, covering the whole sociological field . . . and the prediction of a future change of its attitude."

**Religious Liberty.** By Cecil Northcott. S.C.M. Press, London. 6s. A brief but able discussion of a freedom now threatened anew in many parts of the world—the third chapter of which appeared in *RELIGION IN LIFE*, Spring, 1948.

**The Cloud of Unknowing.** Harper. \$1.50. An appealing pocket-size abridged version of the fourteenth-century devotional classic arranged for modern use; published in association with Pendle Hill.

**The Quaker Message.** Compiled by Sidney Lucas. Pendle Hill, Wallingford, Pa. (Pap., n.p.) "An attempt . . . to state the message of Quakerism in the words of representative Quakers, written over a period of 300 years . . . to show the vital message Quakerism has for the present and immediate future."

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**Poets of Christian Thought.** By Henry M. Battenhouse. Ronald Press Company, New York. \$2.50. Seeks to present a "balanced view of developing Christian thought down the centuries as it is reflected in the writings of our major poets"—from Dante to T. S. Eliot.

**Studies in Religious Poetry of the 17th Century.** By W. L. Doughty. Epworth, London. 7s.6d. Introduction for the general reader to Vaughan, Crashaw, Traherne, and others; concerned with subject matter rather than literary criticism.

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